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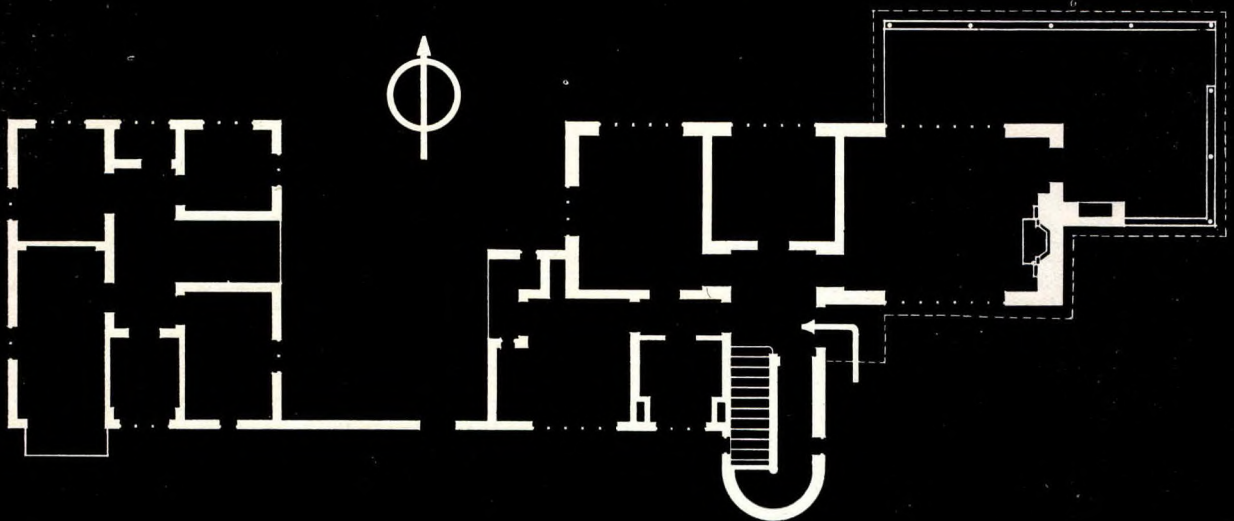
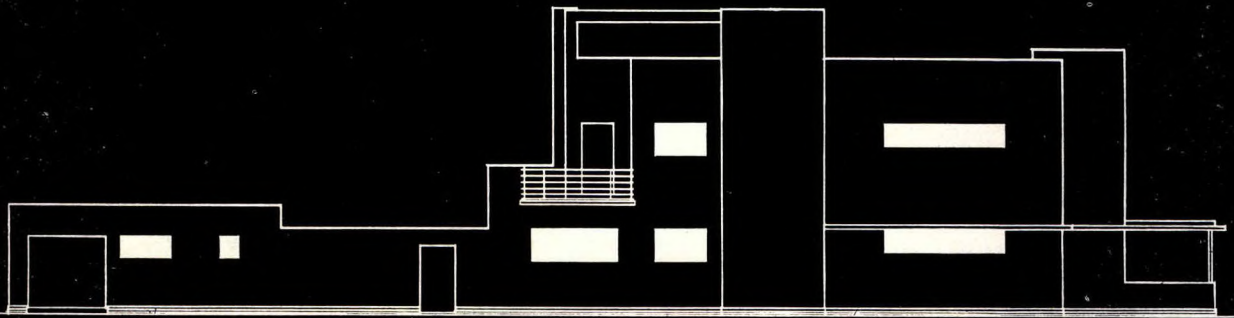
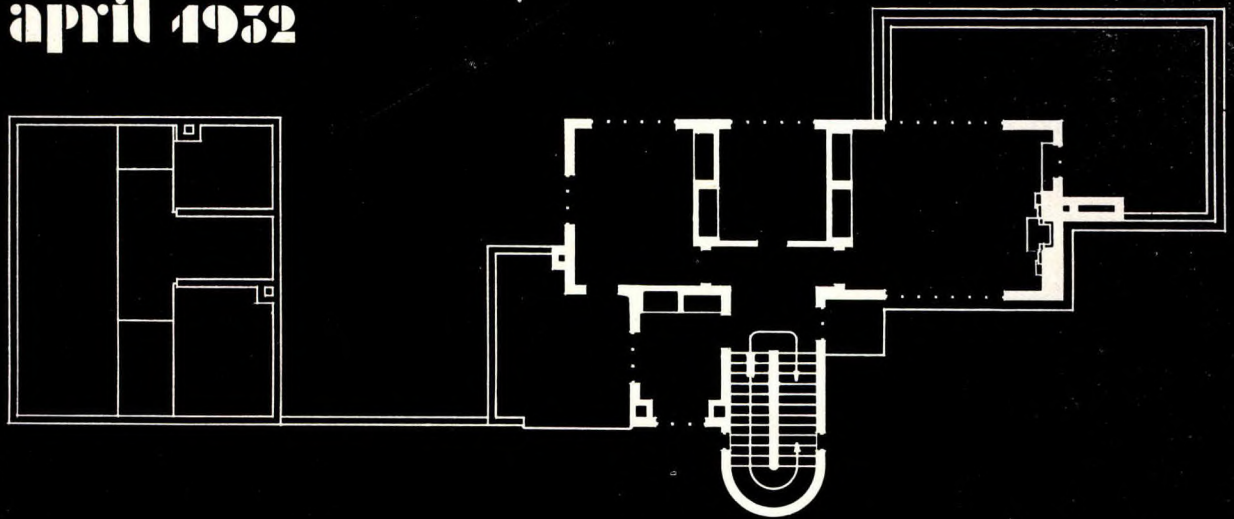
the south african architectural record

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house munro pretoria architect mcintosh

sir reginald blomfield hits out

One is increasingly surprised at the ignorance displayed by writers on architectural subjects. Sweeping statements about "modern architecture" revealing a complete disregard for the most elementary concepts of architectural form appear regularly in the semi-technical press. For example in a review of work at the Royal Academy appeared the following amazing statement: Here we have a frankly modernist building, with flat roofs, corner windows, and a complete absence of mouldings. Surely a convenient and accommodating definition! But quite meaningless as recent examples of "modern" architecture in England have shown. For the slick recipe lop off the roof (leaving the chimney lonely projecting into the sky), take two corner windows and let them face opposite ways (that popular faux-pas of the I'll-try-modern-for-a-lark-architect) and remove the mouldings produces a sorry mutilated thing. Because our clever architect has taken as his basis a trusty symmetrical "traditional" plan and hacked and pulled it about in a furious attempt to modernize the reluctant form. But the house is not the right shape to start with, the plan is not the right plan—so it is useless to cut and trim from the outside: the change must start further in. We must model outwards, we must conceive the problem clearly, then our house will have shape. Note—the problem. Because the arbitrary limitations imposed by a pre-selected traditional "style" are not flexible enough to embrace the increasingly varied problems which we meet to-day. Therefore the problem is the limiting factor, and it must be included at the outset. The traditional approach is confused—stifled: the forms of architecture will have significance only if they rise unfettered from the testing-ground of humanity. For building is the prerogative of the people—

the days of the architectural virtuoso are numbered. But let me quote Sir Reginald Blomfield in the "Manchester Guardian" (he was speaking at the British Academy):

●

"In recent years there have been unmistakable signs of a break away from the great tradition of the past—and the rift is all the more serious because it is partly to the good and partly to the bad. The new architecture has deliberately turned its back on the past. Now, it is all to the good to throw away meaningless forms and superfluous ornament, but it seems to be forgotten that the details of architecture are like the words of a language—it all depends how they are used. There is no more reason why an architect should limit the resources of his art to the capabilities of a box of bricks than that a writer should confine himself to words of one syllable. Buildings should be something more than packing cases in which holes are punched for doors and windows; and there are qualities of rhythm and proportion, mass composition, and fine planning such as one finds in the work of the great French architects of the eighteenth century which must still be the ideal of those who really care for architecture. The new architects seem to have forgotten these things—they have tried to substitute for them a narrow and arbitrary conception of efficiency and have lost sight of the fact that architecture is not engineering, and that beautiful and ordered form is an essential part of its problem. If the new architects would widen and deepen their conception of 'efficiency' they might yet make good their claims to have revitalised architecture. They will not make good on the lines they are now following. What is wanted nowadays, in

architecture and in all the arts is some definite standard, some touchstone by which to test the value of the unending series of experiments which seem to be the penalty of our restless civilisation, and it is in this regard that we have lost so much since the days of the eighteenth century."

Sir Reginald is indignant. Therefore Sir Reginald exaggerates. He likens the contemporary house to "a packing case in which holes are punched for doors and windows." Sir Reginald does not know the laws of organic growth, the laws of simplification, the laws of centrality. There are lessons to be learned from simple things. From the growth and structure of a plant—yes, even from a box of bricks. When a man confuses decoration with structure, when he is convinced that beauty and floridity are synonymous—then it is high time that he played with bricks and studied the cube. For the cube does not become ugly simply because we call it a packing case.

One is easily led off the track by the use of foolish parallels. A careful consideration of the cube, and of different combinations of cubes will be more fruitful for the creative architect than a note book packed with the richness of his favourite architectural style. One has only to see the results of embodying the styles to realise the sterility, the confusion of the law of application. The law of application would be rather amusing had it not spoiled the face of countless cities. Suppose an architect is asked to design a block of offices. He selects his STYLE. This is rather an arbitrary business, but should he decide on Italian Renaissance or French Renaissance, he will be fairly safe for these are very familiar styles. Tudor is rather less popular to-day, but at one time any form of Gothic was quite de rigueur. He selects his style because as a student he visited Florence or Versailles, and he is convinced that it is the loveliest and purest in architecture. Be it sixteenth, seventeenth, or eighteenth century

architecture. His favourite buildings are like jars of honey from which he sucks the sweetness. Then he rigs up an approximate framework on the site and—voila, the honey. Of course should he concentrate on the ideas of OFFICES, requirements, efficiency, to-day: he is a bounder, for he has violated tradition . . . Sir Reginald Blomfield can barely conceal his contempt for work which is not based (the law of application) on the architecture of the eighteenth century in France. It is almost incredible—but it is true. I have before me as I write some photographs of the Haus Tugendhat, by Mies van der Rhoë. It is not ugly . . . its forms are "beautiful and ordered" but these forms are unfamiliar. There is a freedom, a calm merging from room to room—from room to garden. There is a new definition of space. There is breadth and repose; an intellectual stability. And there is fine planning, but it is different planning Sir Reginald, and you don't understand it.

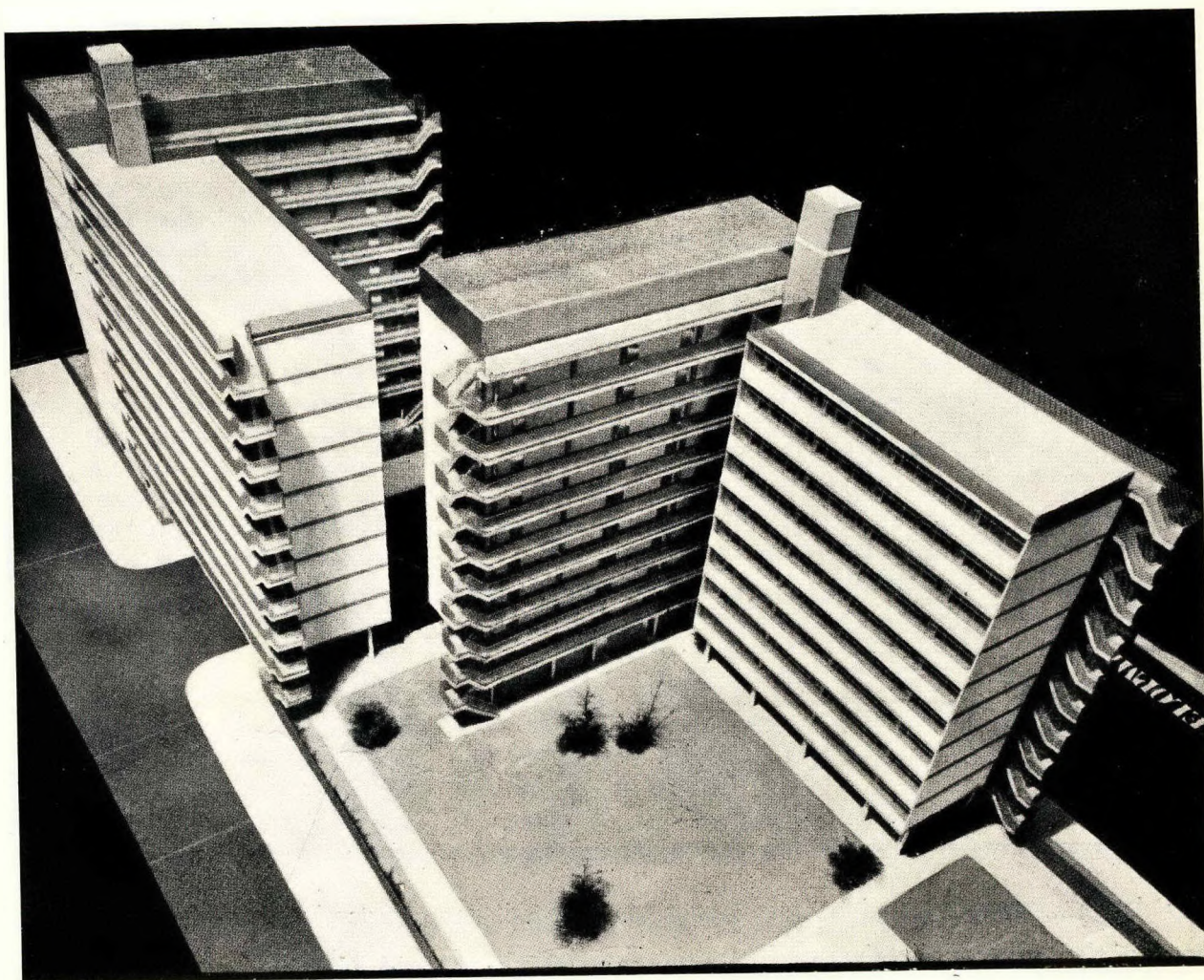
We have seen your Richelieu and Senlis—and admired them; but why should we copy them. Because you think that architecture reached its high water-mark in France—at a given time? Too arbitrary and personal. Always it is the eighteenth century, the dignity, the grandeur. But think of the vulgarity, the weakness of draping our simple buildings with stolen trifles. The pomp and bombast of colouring our every action with a background of—the eighteenth century. One thinks of Regent Street—your Regent Street Sir Reginald, and one dreams of projects . . .

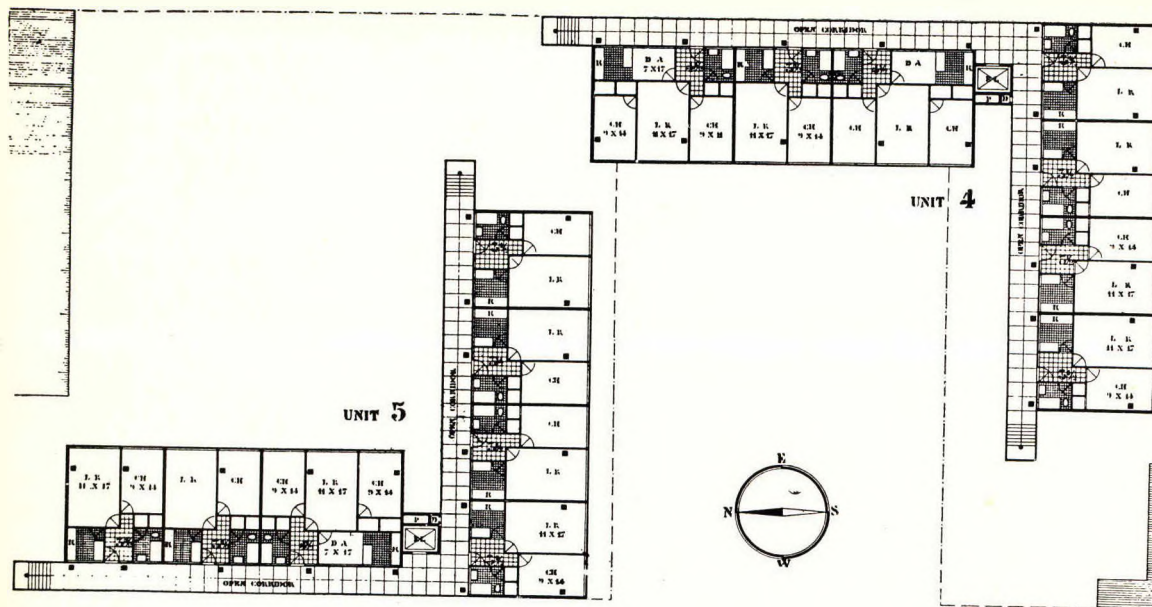
And this question of a narrow and arbitrary conception of efficiency. Is it so narrow? Perhaps there is more of humanity in an architecture which brings light and space to the small, struggling man. Did the great architects of the past concern themselves very much with the working man. A chateau for a Richelieu, a pavilion, a casino, a toy—pretty things which we shall build on. No—the process is in the opposite direction. We must simplify through a great complexity—not complicate that which is meaningless. For the past will not carry us far—the history of the future is more significant, and we shall find inspiration in sources which are in-

commensurable with the styles. The humanities will give shape to our forms, and passion and strength will flow in. "A touchstone is wanted." A touchstone is here, but the medium has changed, the scene has changed; a revaluation is required, and we must cleanse the dross from our minds to perceive the truth.

over

new york
proposed housing development
howe & lescaze architects
photo • architectural forum





typical floor
new york
proposed housing development
howe and lescaze architects

le corbusier and russia

The "Architectural Review" for May, 1932, is devoted to a very thorough exposition of Russian architecture. Mr. Robert Byron discusses "The Foundations," and M. Berthold Lubetkin "The Builders." The latter section is illustrated by many fine projects for clubs, flats, polytechnics, industrial works, etc. Some of M. Lubetkin's work is very stimulating and reflects a genius which "represents a union between the analytical and scientific European mind with the boldness and originality of an eastern mind that has been influenced by America." Perhaps the most interesting (and disappointing) section is that illustrating the competitive designs for the new Soviet Palace, at Moscow. Disappointing because the award was made to an immature design, while vigorous schemes by Gropius and le Corbusier were rejected. Even remembering Frank Lloyd

Wright's dictum "that the net result of any competition is an average by the average of averages," one had hoped that the U.S.S.R. jury would not be influenced by sham symmetry.

At Geneva we had le Corbusier thinking too quickly, and pushing too far ahead on unknown paths for his contemporaries, and now at Moscow—a repetition. It is heartbreaking to think that an architect's value like that of a painter must perforce be recognised after his death. But this is not altogether true of le Corbusier, for to-day architects are embodying the principles which he laid down ten years ago. His influence is far-reaching, so that perhaps he will eventually be enabled to build a great work, exciting, instinct with contemporary life, and a worthy contribution to the architecture of the world.

• his design.... "was rejected because it was too practical, not sufficiently ornamented and palatial... it was the choice of the technicians but the award was refused him on a treacherous technicality—he did not use the proper inking—" from "new masses"

recent world architecture

There is a growing tendency in the "Architectural Forum" (U.S.A.), to illustrate work of an international character. In the March, 1932, issue, in addition to pictures of several of the designs for the new U.S.S.R. Palace there are model/photographs and plans of a Housing Development scheme by Howe and Lescaze (illustrated elsewhere in this issue of the "S.A. Architectural Record"). "The project is a commendable attempt towards raising the standard of city housing conditions." The arrangement of the buildings is such as to provide a maximum of fresh air and sunlight, and to provide large open space for recreational purposes. The old wasteful type of internal court plan has been discarded—and the structure rises cleanly defined and organic. I will quote from the Forum: "The open corridors served by a central elevator at the juncture of the two wings . . . secures the advantages of rapid communication, eliminates interior stair halls, and provides each apartment with an open air balcony. The orientation of the units is such that the northern exposure (U.S.A.) is used for service and communication entirely, and apartments have the benefit of east, south and west outlooks. These buildings would lend themselves well to mass production methods . . . The construction is simple and each individual apartment is standardized as to design and equipment.

The whole project has been planned to replace the intolerable slum conditions existing in the Lower East Side of New York City."

Elsewhere we illustrate two further examples of international architecture—both in South Africa. House Munro, in Pretoria, by one of the younger architects marks a very definite stage in the steady growth of an international tendency in this country. That such a house should be built—so far from the centre of things—is in itself a very significant indication of the increasing urge for men to express themselves in terms of a world-wide code. It would be instructive for architects to discuss in the Journal the desirability or otherwise of this tendency.

The architects' office is a refreshing essay in interior decoration, and the harmonies of colour and form produced by such simple means should stimulate a keen interest in further experiments in this direction. The background of a practising architect must influence favourably or adversely his clients. It is an index of his capabilities and his taste. Let us consider closely the suitability of our offices . . . through the eye of the client. For confusion is wasteful. Il faut cultiver notre jardin.

to the editors, "the south african architectural record."

dear sirs,

there have been criticisms of the new cover of the journal and requests to return to the "old style." not only has it been said that the omission of the capitals has made the headings unimportant, but it has also been criticised that the composition of the cover shows a lack of "balance."

though the design of the cover is certainly not symmetrical, it is nevertheless balanced. printed and unprinted spaces have different optical values, and it is the distribution of these values only which makes up the real "balance" of the whole cover.

the medallion of the old cover may have historical value, but from an æsthetic point of view, it is entirely lacking in quality. it is by no means the peculiarity of the form which, to my mind, has mostly improved the cover, but the idea which is obviously underlying the text and its arrangement (types and colours) and which must have sprung from considerations of the literary importance of the cover rather than from the wish to create a new form.

it only adds to the journal, if the fresh spirit expressed within its pages becomes visible on the cover. the demand, to go "back to the old style," is only a poor confession that the difference between vital form and "style" is not yet understood.

one should not attempt to bind the contents of the new record in forms of the past.

going with the times, the "new record" too, I suppose, will at some future date lay aside its present raiment and veil itself in new. time moves on!

f. b.

town planning and the architect

by e. m. powers, f.r.i.b.a.

To the architect, town planning specially appeals. It is an opportunity for finding a beautiful form of expression for the life of the community ; it gives more completely the opportunity of adopting the general principles of design, giving due emphasis to the main and subordinate parts to each other and their relationship to the parts composing the whole.

The practice of town planning, embracing as it does the lay out of schemes for new cities, industrial towns and residential suburbs, and the replanning of portions of older towns for the improvement of overcrowded areas, combined with the technical problems of contours, drainage and traffic control, covers so wide a field, that it is only possible, in a short paper, to touch upon general essentials and underlying principles. It is therefore my purpose to refer to those features and details of town planning which more particularly concern the architect and his work, rather than an instruction in the practice of the town planner.

That pre-arranged and well ordered planning of towns and public places was practised by the Ancients there is no doubt whatever. Many of the ancient cities of Greece and Rome were laid out and built on definite and regular lines. It was indeed a marked characteristic of the Greeks that they usually took advantage of natural features, and were ever ready to make use of hillsides and rocky eminences to give emphasis and grandeur to their temples.

The Acropolis at Athens is an example of the formation of a central group of buildings on a commanding hill; on this rocky eminence, overlooking the city were erected several temples, approached by an imposing inclined way and the gateway of the Propylea.

It seems, however, that the private buildings and dwelling houses were comparatively insignificant, whereas the public buildings

and places were planned on a scale of magnificence that is astonishing.

Plan of the Excavated portion of the town of Pompeii.

In the work of the Romans we find less consideration for the site than was characteristic of the Greeks ; where the Greek would adapt his arrangement of plan to suit the site, the Roman would adapt the site to suit his plan cutting away rocks and levelling the ground to obtain a clear field for his work.

The general lay-out of the Roman town seems to have been on regular lines similar in many ways to that of the Greek ; there were usually two chief thoroughfares running at right angles to one another, and, in order that the "Forum" or meeting place should be as central as possible, it invariably occupied the angle between them, but separated therefrom by the public buildings surrounding and enclosing the Forum.

In a view of a curved street in Pompeii, you will notice the paved roadway with its cambered surface falling from the centre to drain the surface to each side, similar to our present day method of kerbing and channelling.

Quite a number of the older English towns show the influence of Roman planning and fortifications such as Winchester, Carnarvon, Conway and many others.

The ancient town of Chester is based on the rectilinear lines of a regular Roman Camp ; you will notice the regular lay-out of the original town within the fortified walls, and the irregular growth beyond as the town developed through mediaeval times.

If we study the planning of English, Continental and even Colonial towns, we would at once divide them into two main classifications—the "formal" and the "informal." I have already referred briefly to the formal class with its prototype in the ruined cities

of Ancient Greece and Rome. The informal type, however, may be considered as the mediaeval towns, those that have grown and developed from mediaeval times. They were originally built at the junctions of main highways or rivers or around some castle or monastic building. Towns of this type will be familiar to many and are numerous throughout England and the continent of Europe ; many of them, from their origin in the middle ages, have since developed by reason of becoming large industrial mining or commercial centres, others ports for shipping, while others again have remained the smaller market towns of agricultural districts. The latter with their irregular streets converging upon the market place, surrounded by quaint buildings, which is the business meeting place, provide much charm and interest to the architect, artist and tourist alike.

Formal planning of Towns

Theories have been allowed to develop with regard to the formal and informal planning of lay-outs without a real appreciation of the true relationship of formality of site.

In a country such as South Africa, for instance, there can seldom be a successful complete formality in town planning such as may be shown on paper.

The designer will often be faced with the choice of accepting either a road line which though straight and formal on plan, because of undulations of the ground, will give him an irregular or informal roof line for his buildings, or, alternatively, following closely the contour of the ground, may produce a straight and formal roof line.

This may be a more important element in producing a successful design, than the more apparent formality of the straight roads on plan.

The irregular lines of main thoroughfares and connecting streets converging upon a central space often provide great opportunities for the architect. With the development of the large town, the old marketing place frequently becomes modernised and remodelled and is often designated the "civic" centre, although "civic art," I fear,

is too often understood to consist in filling our open spaces and public squares with fountains and groups of statuary and of covering the facades of our public buildings with meaningless ornament of bunches of leaves and fruit festooned and tied with impossible stone ribbons.

In the old market place at Dresden, the square is surrounded by important buildings, the main thoroughfares enter the square at the corners and the church tower closes the vista at the opening where two roads enter.

Rapid growth of Towns and overcrowding.

The last century has been remarkable for an exceedingly rapid and extensive growth of towns, not only in England and Europe, but also in the great Dominions and, more particularly, in mining and industrial areas and seaport towns. This rapid growth has, in most cases, produced most serious results, miles and miles of ground have been covered with dense masses of buildings along rows of streets frequently badly planned, without any consideration for the interests of the people compelled by circumstances to live in them.

Such cases mostly occur near to factories, or, in proximity to places of business, and it is apparent that the main desire has been to crowd the greatest number of buildings on the available ground. No open spaces are provided or sites for schools or halls for social gatherings, and too often the land owners interests have been studied, without care or forethought for the needs of the community.

Municipalities and other governing bodies have looked on helplessly while estate after estate has been overcrowded, though the building regularities may have been strictly conformed to with regard to sanitation, water supply and minimum air space about the buildings.

It is thus that slum areas are created and, in truth, the amenities of life neglected, endless rows of brick boxes looking on to dreary streets and squalid back yards can never be homes for the people, however complete may be the drainage system, or however detailed the bye-laws under which they are built.

The remedy for these evils, lies, undoubtedly, in the study and application of modern and scientific town planning, and in this direction, considerable progress has been made in recent years.

It is rarely that an opportunity occurs for the planning of a large city, in this branch of the practice. Improvements and replanning of congested areas in our large industrial towns occur much more frequently. There are many notable examples, such as the Kingsway, Aldwych and Strand improvements in London. In this instance a once densely populated slum area is now a most important business centre; with frontages of some of the city's finest buildings. In Birmingham a similar slum area in the centre of the city is to-day the civic centre. A similar example in the Dominions is the recent partial replanning of Sydney, the capital of New South Wales. From a small settlement one hundred and thirty years ago, Sydney developed into an important seaport on account of its wonderful harbour, though the town itself was congested and ill planned, it is to-day one of the first cities in the empire by reason of partial replanning and the widening of its principal streets.

In these and similar cases, where reconstruction has been undertaken, the cost of expropriation of properties and compensations to vested interests amounting to many millions of pounds would have been saved, had well considered schemes, with provision for future expansion, been originally embarked upon.

The city of Philadelphia.

The formal type of lattice work plan with its rectangular series of streets, as in the city of Philadelphia, has been most usually adopted in the lay-out of new cities and towns during the last century. As in the large cities of the United States, and Melbourne, Australia, while Pretoria and Johannesburg are two examples in this country. While this type of lay-out has much to recommend it by its convenience in providing regular shaped building blocks, it is open to some objection. It does not provide convenient roads for passing from one centre to another as all traffic must travel along two sides of a triangle to get from point to point. In large towns and

cities, this difficulty is, to a great extent, overcome by introducing diagonal roads, but this solution is not entirely happy architecturally, the shapes of the plots, spaces and road junctions which are created by these radiating streets crossing the square network of roads, are not such as to produce satisfactory building facades or beautiful open spaces.

I have noticed that, in many cases, where plans of projected townships or the development of estates have been prepared for approval by the Surveyor Generals department in this country they are invariably of the trellis or grid iron type; no doubt for reasons of economy on the part of the land owners, as much time and expense are naturally saved in setting out this type of plan by the Surveyors, all angles being right angles, and the setting out of straight roads is naturally simpler than those forming crescents or curves. In many instances, however, the incorporation of natural features of the landscape would have materially added to the beauty of the scheme.

A striking example of the study and incorporation of natural features is the design selected for "Canberra," the Federal capital of Australia. This was the subject of an open world-wide competition and was won by Mr. W. B. Griffin, a young American architect.

The scheme is a great tribute to the author's genius in town planning on an extensive scale. All natural and topographical features of the site and the surrounding country were amply and carefully considered. Upon an elevated plateau on the West are grouped the Parliament Houses. These have a commanding view over the city, with pleasure grounds and botanical gardens in the foreground. The civic centre is in the middle distance and the main entrance to the city, the railway station is beyond; the vista from Parliament Hill is terminated by Mount Vernon in the distance. The sloping ground immediately below the parliament building is terraced and occupied by groups of administrative buildings. Immediately below again is a large public park through which runs a small stream. This the designer very successfully opened out into

ornamental water and a pleasure lake with several islands picturesquely arranged in groups.

The principal residential quarter of the city is planned in crescent formation, forming a natural amphitheatre and the business centre, hotels and civic buildings occupy a flat middle portion of the scheme. The main station is planned about an open space or concourse which not only gives dignity to the city entrance, but affords ample space for the bustling traffic which must naturally congregate there. It presents also to the visitor a comprehensive idea of the main lay-out as he enters the town, by reason of the main thoroughfares which converge at this centre. On the outskirts of the town, abutting on to the main railway line which partly encircles it, is planned the industrial centre with its warehouses and marshalling yards for the convenient handling of goods traffic.

Enclosed Spaces and Places,

It is not easy for us to realise the great part which the centre or "place" played in the Ancient cities. So much more of life was carried on in the open air and so much more of intercourse and exchange of ideas was effected by speech in the "forum" or the market place in those days when printing and the newspaper were unknown. Yet, even to-day the enclosed market place, the business centre or the civic square is a vital and important feature of mediaeval and modern towns, and are of immense value to the architect. From the excavated remains of ancient Greek and Roman cities, there is ample evidence of the value of these centres and what splendid groups of buildings surrounded and enclosed them. We find a parallel also in the market place of the English country town and the Cathedral close of the mediaeval city, which still, in many cases, on market days are very real centres of the communal life of the district.

The market place at Wells and other Cathedral cities is occupied by the more important buildings and, in many cases, the great church seems to have been the important centre as at Chartres and Amiens. The value of these centres and enclosed places, architecturally, is most apparent, as the effect of the more important buildings would be lost

if they were scattered indiscriminately about the town and would be very imperfectly seen in narrow streets, and no totality of effect would be produced as when they are grouped about a central space.

Ghent is an example of a Church building in too isolated a position, it destroys the sense of enclosure of the square and does not close the vistas of the approaching streets.

The idea of a centre or "place" should not however be confined to the principal centre of the town or suburb. Each area should have its central feature or point of interest, though subordinate to the more important place or square. At those points, where several roads converge, there should be something of an open space arranged to give freedom for the circulation of traffic. These will also provide opportunities for dignified architectural effect at the various road junctions.

Letchworth and Hampstead Garden Suburbs.

The square at Letchworth shows the centre at which many roads converge from different parts of the town, along several of these roads, views of the distant country are obtained and these will permanently remain open. The main wide avenue leads direct from the station and commands a view of the facade of the Municipal buildings.

The square at Hampstead may be taken as a contrast to that at Letchworth; the arrangement is on four square lines to suit Sir Edwin Lutyens fine Renaissance design for the whole of the buildings around this group of "Places."

The two main approaches from the North and the South lead up to two enclosed places which are terminated by the Church in the one case and the Chapel in the other, and between these two buildings, is laid out the large open "green" the one side is kept open to give an uninterrupted view of the Heath while the opposite side forms a background with a row of buildings with the Institute building in the centre which closes the vista across the square from the Heath.

Arrangement of Roads

Roads are primarily highways for traffic; they serve a secondary purpose in affording sites for buildings and should therefore be

considered in relation to both these functions in the order of their relative importance. To satisfy their primary function of highways, roads must be so designed to provide generally for easy access from any point in a town to any other. They must also provide in addition special facilities for the ebb and flow of particular tides of traffic, such as that from the suburbs and outskirts to the business centres, which daily takes place at the beginning and end of the business day; or that across a town from a residential quarter to the area occupied by factories and other places of employment; or again to important railway stations, harbours and other places of industry.

A general scheme of roads may be based on various theoretical figures, and the most common is that representing a trellis as before described. This arrangement is open to the serious objections I mentioned previously, and, in addition, the trellis arrangement produces a monotonous effect architecturally; the street pictures are not closed and the vistas wander off in an indefinite vanishing perspective devoid of interest or variety.

Hereford is an example of a mediaeval town which has developed at the junction of three main thoroughfares.

If we examine the plans of old mediaeval towns which have grown naturally around some castle, church or have sprung up at the junction of main highways, we find that, to a large extent, they consist of main arteries branching from the nucleus of the town in different directions forming a regular radiating system, and further there is a tendency for the cross roads to grow out at right angles from the main roads, and these, in many cases, have been curved or diverted to meet others, forming in the end an irregular network of streets, the outline of which would be more nearly represented by a spider's web.

The nature of the ground in laying out new schemes will usually determine the main framework of roads and introduce much irregularity of form, but some sufficiently simple and largely conceived design of main roads will give to the plan a character of its own that is most desirable.

Except in cases where it is required to keep open some distant view, straight roads indefinitely prolonged without deviation or change of direction, are monotonous. But, where a change of direction is desired, it should be managed in such a way as not seriously to impede traffic. Electric trams and motor vehicles require that sharp curves and abrupt changes of direction should be carefully avoided, and, in the larger towns where the traffic is considerable, the marshalling of it becomes a problem and the necessity for providing small places at the junctions of roads purely for the purpose of giving ample space for traffic circulation will be apparent.

There is a popular theory that a cross road joining a main road at a single junction instead of where four roads meet, reduces the chances of collision to a minimum. This is correct if the traffic from the side road joining that of the main road only is considered, but if it is desired to cross the main road to the side road opposite, the staggering of the roads not only increases the points of possible collision, but also necessitates a change of direction which, in a fast moving vehicle, is very undesirable.

Clarendon Circle Johannesburg

The solution of the traffic problem at a busy intersection of roads at the Twist Street tram terminus, Johannesburg, is that all vehicles must traverse a portion of the circle before turning off into one of the roads converging upon the circle, while the concentration of traffic at this centre naturally suggests the necessity for special caution on the part of drivers of vehicles.

For our most important and busiest highways, we may take a hint from main railway lines where central tracks are provided for through expresses and the outside tracks for slow stopping trains. This system has been largely adopted in continental cities, where multiple tracks are provided on the main roads and boulevards. In many of these roads, special tracks are provided for tramways, for riding and cycling, in addition to those for the ordinary fast and slow vehicles. With such an arrangement, a great improvement is possible in the position of tramlines,

these can be so planned that cars pass alongside the footway and people boarding and leaving them can do so in safety, whereas when trams run in the middle of the roadway, the pedestrian has to make a dash through the traffic at the risk of his life before he can reach the car. In cases of electric and motor driven cars, it is convenient to run the rails along a belt of grass with a footway on each side; thus the tramway becomes a decoration introducing a wide grass margin.

Street Junctions and Places

In addition to being avenues for traffic, roads serve the only less important function of providing frontages for buildings. It does not always follow that the form of road and road junction which would be the most convenient for traffic would necessarily provide for the most satisfactory grouping of buildings when erected. It will, therefore, be necessary, in some cases, to concede something from one point of view or the other. In the one case sacrificing the beauty of the building for the greater convenience of the traffic and, in the other, a little of the directness of traffic lines for the purpose of securing a better facade or grouping of the building.

It is upon the treatment of street junctions that much of the effect of the town will depend; the importance of the effect of enclosure obtained in the larger spaces of the market places I have already referred to, and much of the same importance applies at the crossing of roads to give us a satisfactory street picture.

Where streets cross at right angles, and having securing sufficiently easy lines for the traffic, it is often desirable to close the vistas along one or more of the streets and so avoid an interminable perspective fading away into space. These diagrams indicate several ways of closing a street vista so as to secure an architectural terminal to each street picture. Roads, however, will not always meet at right angles and sometimes three roads are required to meet at a point. Symmetrical junctions can be arranged in these cases, treated in several ways so as to secure an architectural terminal, while the

obtuse angles afford easy lines of traffic in all directions. Where two roads join at an acute angle, it is possible to create quite an effective irregular shaped "place," giving enclosed street pictures at the same time affording sufficiently easy lines for traffic.

The long straight street, while giving directness of access from point to point has one disadvantage architecturally. There is a tendency to monotony, due to the fact that the street picture is much the same for its whole length and, except in the immediate foreground or the terminal feature and the acute perspective in which the frontages of the buildings on either side are seen, tends to destroy any interest which they may have.

Curved streets, on the other hand, invariably produce interesting and often charming street pictures.

The study and treatment of street frontages, of course applies more particularly to town thoroughfares than to roads in suburban and residential areas. In the latter case, houses and groups of cottages with their front gardens and open spaces providing usually an irregular building line, supplies ample opportunity and latitude to the architect in obtaining the massing for his buildings that he desires.

Residential Estates and Site Planning

Between Town Planning and Site Planning there is no line of demarcation. The principles which govern the one also apply to the other. There is, however, a difference between the two and it is convenient to treat them separately. In town planning, the first consideration must be the general convenience of the town and the arrangement of its main roads, whereas, in site planning, the first consideration will be the arrangement of the buildings and the development of the site to the best advantage. There is, therefore, a real difference, and, moreover, where town planning is usually undertaken by Municipalities, the matter of site planning is left to the owners of estates who may be developing the land.

In estate planning, a thorough study of the site and its levels are, of course, necessary, but a further study of its trees, any features

of interest it contains and view prospects it affords are equally essential to success.

It has been too common in the past, for the lay out of estates to be worked out on paper only, and to save trouble, trees and hedgerows whenever these happen to interfere with the plan have been cleared away. Nothing could be more foolish, because any newly laid out building estate, at its best, looks poor and raw ; the gardens are empty, or for a year or so are filled with struggling shrubs and young trees. Where, for example, a road can be planned to run alongside a well grown hedge, a beautiful decoration and special characteristic is at once secured for the road and a sense of privacy for the gardens abutting upon it, which would perhaps take years to secure by new growth. Existing trees, either singly or in groups, should be preserved at any cost.

The cost of road making and finishing in purely residential areas calls for much consideration in planning, although roads may be required by local authority to be a minimum width of say, forty feet. In many cases, excepting main thoroughfares, these are little used for traffic except by tradesmen's carts and the residents cars. In such cases, the cost of construction can be economically effected by macadamising the centre traffic portion and forming a grass belt with small trees on each side between the road and side-walks. This class of road is much more picturesque and affords a much pleasanter outlook for the residences than a broad uninteresting stretch of asphalt.

Whereas it may be desirable in town street planning to close a vista with a facade of architectural merit in the garden suburb ; conditions may be very different. In the latter case buildings are grouped in a less formal manner, the frontages are often irregular and the forecourt gardens suggest the sense of

openness as a contrast to the enclosed picture of the town "place."

In this country we are favoured with so much land out of doors that we are able to plan our residences as self contained detached units, either double storey or the bungalow type, each is built usually on its own plot, and consequently the architect has a much freer hand in the grouping of his buildings than in more closely built up areas.

In traversing the intricacies of town planning and avoiding, as far as possible, very technical details, I have endeavoured, in a somewhat sketchy manner, to demonstrate how very closely the practice of town planning and that of the architect are bound together.

Happily there is growing up a new sense of the rights of the community in general as distinct from those of the individual and this recognition of the common interest is being more and more realised and finds expression in the practice of the town planner.

The development of Estates for new townships and residential suburbs on modern and sound town planning principles, not only provides better homes for the enjoyment of social amenities for all, but particularly for those who in the past were forced by circumstances to consider such amenities as the special privilege of the more affluent.

The development of the garden suburbs and well considered housing schemes, in place of congested areas in or near centres of industry, give an added interest to the worker in his home, garden and a sense of pride of citizenship in his town.

It therefore remains for the town planner, whether he be surveyor or architect, to give of his best, and to collaborate in the production of the ideal for the commonwealth.

(The above address, illustrated by lantern slides, was given to an audience of art students in the Natal Technical College, on May 17th, 1932.)

the south african institute of art

what it is and what it stands for !

(The following memorandum has been compiled by two or three members of the S.A. Institute of Art who are anxious that it should function on broader lines, and, who, at the same time, make a general appeal to what they believe is a much larger section of the people of South Africa than is usually imagined. Their object is, primarily to explain the aims of the Institute, and then to show that, with adequate support, it can perform not only a useful but a national purpose.)

How to live in relation to Art and Why ? is the haunting question.

It haunted Leo Francois and set him stumping South Africa in 1926 in search of sympathetic fellow-enthusiasts. A number of kindred spirits banded themselves together under the title of "The South African Institute of Art," and declared it established with the following objects:

(a) To promote the intercourse of societies and individuals interested in art in South Africa and to encourage the holding of exhibitions of works of art in South Africa and elsewhere.

(b) To encourage the teaching and development of Arts and Crafts.

(c) To emphasise the value of art as an element in Culture and to work for the removal of any disadvantages which may be hindering its better cultivation.

They then framed a constitution, planted branches in Natal, Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein and Johannesburg, linked up with existing art organisations in Grahamstown, Kimberley and Rhodesia, appointed officers and set a Union organisation going, a Central Council to meet once a year at headquarters, headquarters to be movable at intervals of two years. This arrangement which was made to satisfy the idea that the Institute should be national rather than local, has

proved a difficulty, for the moving of headquarters has brought about lapses of time in the work taken up by the Institute. The last move, a move made from Eastern Province to the Transvaal was accompanied by a hope that the Transvaal would undertake to foster the Institute for a longer period than two years, and that five years at least would elapse before another move was contemplated. But, to their surprise, there was no spontaneous growth and a good deal of more or less overt opposition, with the result that after the lapse of some years of effort the Central Committee of the Institute is compelled to face facts.

The world position to-day is one that follows naturally on a general breakdown of credit and confidence. Who now will "have time" for art when there is "no" work ! Who can concentrate on interpreting the true and the beautiful to their fellows when one and all are obsessed with the need to live, and while the difficulty of obtaining bare necessities is for many people so great if not insuperable ?

It is as if one should discuss flavouring when there is no soup and frills without the frock. But Art is more than flavouring and frills, and "will go on," as Masefield's Dauber said with his dying breath, "Nor have we crashed to that degree ; nor crashed at all if we will not have it so."

But, undoubtedly, the Institute has arrived at the parting of the ways—at a crisis in its existence and is now faced with stagnation—or renaissance. Before considering how such renaissance is possible, it is well to state clearly what the Institute may hope to do.

It can foster in men, women and children their natural love of things thoughtfully planned and well-done. This will include the whole range of manufacture, the home, the garden, the village, the city, the countryside, literature, drama, music, drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, dress, behaviour :—

and do this without regard to commercial or other vested interest, class or race—with the widest sympathy and support for those whose work is good. It can combat always and everywhere all that is hostile to good work, and all apathy, insincerity and ugliness generally : and can study, collate and spread a knowledge of the work and thoughts of others in these directions—both past and present.

It can facilitate and enlarge the opportunities for the study and enjoyment of beautiful and original work within the range of our senses : and can bring together men and women for the interchange of opinions and impressions on art so as to reach new points of view and to kindle and foster the fire of genuine inspiration in the minds of the younger artists, a sympathetic environment being a great stimulus to the artist.

In order to attain these objects, the following new programme is suggested. This is, of course, open to amendment and amplification as time and experience suggest.

This programme is separated into activities for the Central and Transvaal Committees respectively as follows :—

For the Transvaal Executive :—

1. Renewals and new Memberships.
2. A course, organised for at least twelve months in advance, of monthly illustrated lectures on Art. These could well be repeated to Pretoria and Reef towns and possibly the schools. They would be free to members and students ; others would be invited to contribute towards expenses.
3. Regular, bright and sympathetic talks about the pictures in the Johannesburg Art Gallery. To sustain interest these should be also monthly, spaced between the lectures and held preferably at night.
4. The reading and discussion of short papers between members at regular monthly meetings. These could take place alternately or simultaneously with (3) ; by preference in the Art Gallery, by night.
5. Broadcast lectures and talks on wireless.
6. Business meetings quarterly which all members of the Institute should be in-

vited to attend, of Central and Transvaal Institutes jointly.

7. Holding of regular small loan exhibitions in Johannesburg and Reef Towns, of Paintings, Etchings, Miniatures, Sculpture, Craftwork. There might be one or more objects loaned by the Johannesburg Art Gallery, or items acquired from time to time from surplus overseas collections, or loaned or donated by private collectors. This presupposes the foundation of sub-Committees or co-operation of Reef Municipalities to take local responsibility. Sales would be encouraged.
8. The pursuit of such local enquiries and studies and preparation of such Reports as the Central Executive may require.
9. Approaching the Johannesburg Municipality in connection with the new library for (1) suitable room for Art Exhibition ; (2) Opportunity to South African Artists to participate in interior decoration, by stages.

For the Central Executive (more or less in conjunction with Local Executives or through its own co-opted Sub-Committees).

(a) Arranging Annual Exhibitions in conjunction with the S.A. Academy or the local Art Society.

(b) In consultation with local Institutes collecting data, local and overseas, and preparing and pursuing a policy directed towards :—

1. Art teaching in schools as an essential culture subject at all stages.
2. Teaching of Arts and Crafts in Technical Schools.
3. Employment of Artists and Craftsmen, when trained, on public and other works.

(c) Collection of Art news, local and overseas, and its publication, informing the Institute of the world outlook and progress in Art matters.

(d) The compilation of Art Bibliography with concise suggestions for courses of reading, and special reference to works available (or desirable) in South African Libraries.

(e) Consideration of questions of protection of Art industrially and the removal of burdens and inequities and affording the necessary opportunity for South African Artists to practice their craft.

(f) Generally presiding actively over the affairs of the Institute as a whole. Stimulating and co-ordinating the work of local Executives. Working in co-operation with all other societies and bodies, having as an objective the advancement of Art.

An appeal is made to the younger generation in particular to carry on and develop the work indicated here. In a young country like South Africa, a body such as the Institute backed by the energy and driving force of the younger generation of artists and art loving people, should have a far reaching influence upon the future of South African Art.

It is of course obvious that the Institute cannot attempt to influence the making of pictures or artistic technique, but will endeavour to guide appreciation of art in its highest and most enduring forms. On the intellectual side it can create an atmosphere. Another part of its work is to assist the material interests of the craftsman and in time, to become the officially recognised body to whom authority would refer questions relating to art and the general advancement of art education.

Such a body must remove the provincial attitude still to be found in many parts of the

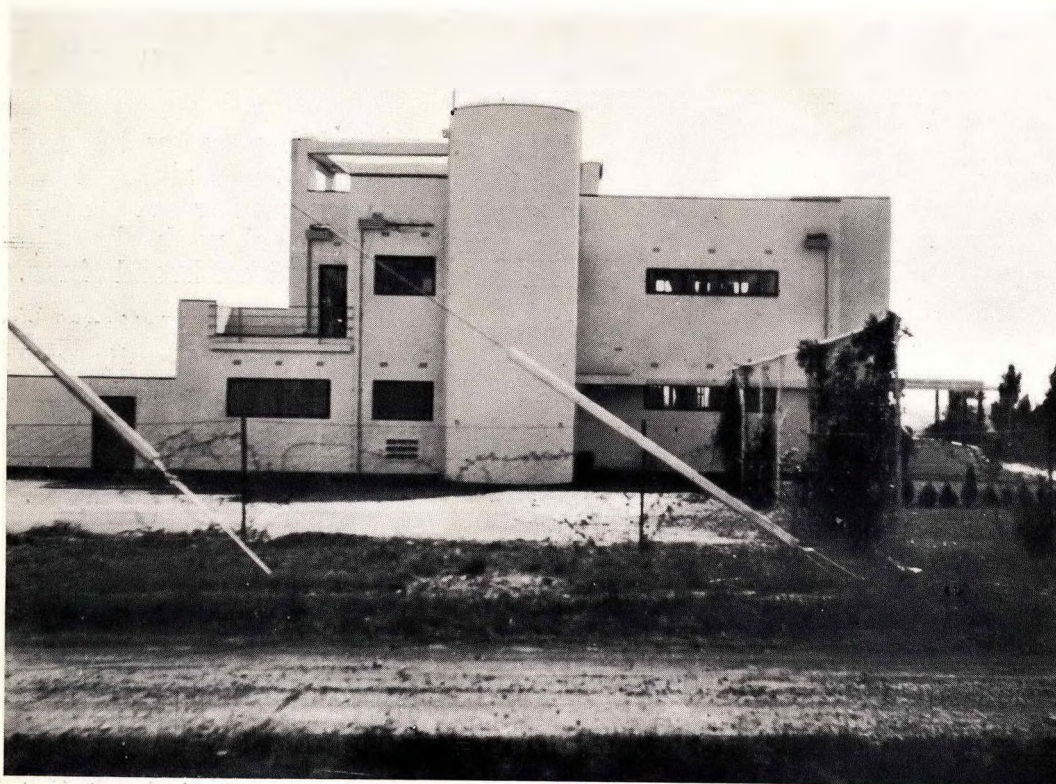
country by working in the interests of South Africa as a whole and not with an eye to the individual interests of any particular centre or province.

The ideas submitted here may be called Utopian, but they are quite feasible, if those who are genuinely anxious for art in South Africa are prepared to deal with the whole question courageously and on broad lines.

The Institute set out to be National and this will always be kept in mind by its executive, so as to avoid any local spirit interfering with the wider outlook.

The Executive of the Institute appeals to artists and the interested lay public, to those who formed the Institute and to those who have hitherto looked askance at its endeavours, to the older men who are inclined to grow weary of well doing and the younger men who are inclined to consider that the older people are out of date—to come forward and throw in their weight.

The work may be slow and difficult but it will be infinitely worth while, not only for what is achieved for art, but in the gradual formation of a national cultural spirit which cannot be created by violence or legislation, but by the gradual concentration of informed effort in a direction that does not aim at industrial, sectional or racial aggrandisement, but a genuine coming together of South Africans for a National ideal.



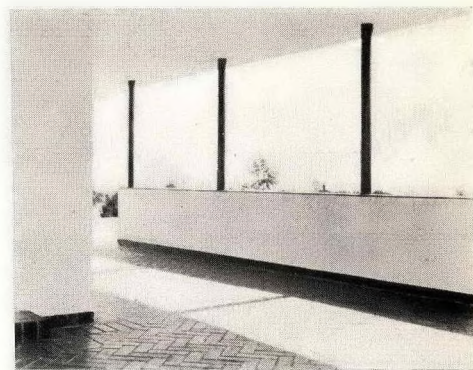
house munro pretoria • • architect mcintosh



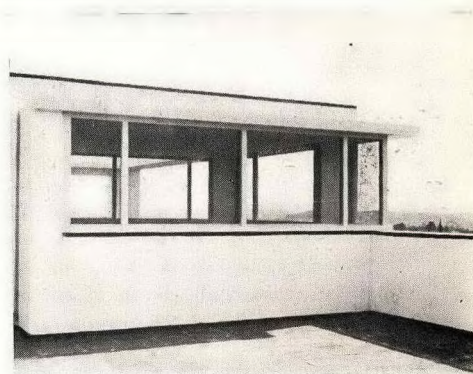
the ground plan of a dwelling house is a geometrical projection of its spatial idea the organizing plan for moving within the house. the elevation, facade, is the result of that plan and not the starting point of the house design. hence no artificial symmetry, but a free functional arrangement of the succession of rooms, short, time-saving passages of communication, moving space for the children, clear separation between the living, the sleeping, and the housekeeping parts of the house, and finally proper utilization of the ground and especially the sunny aspect

● walter gropius

• clear view verandah



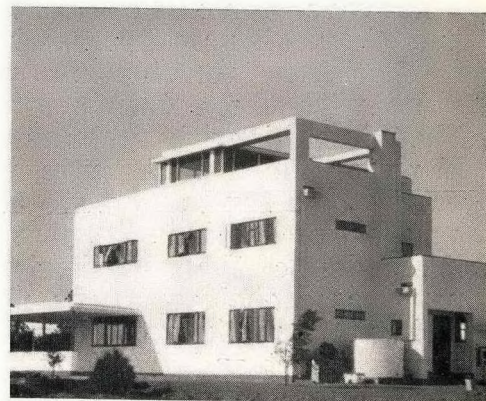
• sleeping porch



• main entrance



• garden front



new harbour for algoa bay



A Temporary Passenger Jetty. B Breakwater now Completed. C Existing Passenger Jetty now Closed. D Preliminary work in connection with North Arm of Docks. Note. —The whole area of foreshore shown in this photograph is reclaimed ground.

An official sketch plan of the new Algoa Bay harbour scheme was prepared by Mr. J. F. Craig, Harbour Engineer. It is based on the latest scientific data available, and aims at providing a harbour which will more than suffice for all present requirements and provide ample scope for future development. Three of its principal features are: (1) Relative cheapness in comparison with the original scheme; (2) expeditious construction; (3) full modern equipment. In its entirety the Craig scheme envisages not merely the largest but the best equipped and finest all-round deep water harbour on the South African coast.

An essential part of the new scheme is the further extension of the Breakwater for a distance of one thousand feet, which will bring its Northern termination approximately in line with the entrance to the projected harbour. This will create an outer basin of still water which will serve in a multiple capacity, as a sand and wave trap (ensuring the fullest protection of the harbour entrance and freedom of the inner basin from silt and range), as a sheltered area for vessels not desiring to come into the basin immediately, for small craft and also for the accommodation of oil tankers. A further advantage

which will become of the utmost value in the future is that it will provide the finest "landing ground" for flying boats on the South African coast.

Taking both basins into consideration, the plan provides for an enclosed or sheltered area of about three hundred acres. The entrance to the proposed scheme will be six hundred feet wide. In its present form the plan visualises the largest and finest deep water harbour on the South African coast. There is nothing between Walvis Bay and Delagoa Bay that can compare with it in point of acreage, wharfage capacity, depth of water, protection from weather and possibility of expansion in time to come.

Dredging is held to present no difficulties. The fullest investigation has shown that the basin can be thoroughly dredged to an even depth sufficient for the manoeuvring of the largest vessels trading to South Africa.

Another section of the scheme is the area to be reclaimed along the existing foreshore.

It is proposed to reclaim a very extensive area, to provide for additional deep-water wharfage, extensive shed accommodation and assembling grounds, including the necessary network of railway tracks. Incidentally, the railway tracks shown laid out on the

assembling ground approximate some twenty miles of sidings. The South Jetty will, of course, disappear.

An important feature of the project is that it makes extensive provision for the berthing and discharge of oil tank steamers. It is planned to berth the tankers against the eastern face of the broad quay running north from the Southern Breakwater, i.e., in the outer basin.

It is contemplated locating the great storage tanks in what is known as Happy Valley on the west side of Humewood Road where the shunting line passes under the road.

With this in view it is proposed that the oil lines shall be laid—beneath the surface, of course,—along the oil wharf, up the Breakwater, across the present Block Yard and up the Valley to the oil tanks.

Ample provision is made for deep water berths. Vessels of all types are provided for against the faces of all four wharves which comprise the main scheme. Roughly, eighteen vessels can be tied up and worked, and this largely exceeds the needs of the harbour based on present-day trade.

The quay which is to take the place of the existing North Jetty will be two thousand five hundred feet long and nearly two hundred and fifty feet wide. The plan provides for its construction by means of concrete cylinders in accordance with the most modern scientific practices. It will be faced on the inner side, while on the outer (northern) side a broad boulevard providing for vehicular and foot traffic will be laid down. The shedding contemplated is of the most modern description. This will be the main passenger wharf. The wharf will accommodate four at least and possibly five steamers—four if they are all of the size of the largest mail boats.

As to the handling of the cargo landed and for shipment, the plan provides for a plentitude of shed accommodation on the wharves. These are all directly connected with the railway system, which over and above the necessary lines along the wharves, sidings on the assembling ground and so forth, affords six lines directly connecting the railway to the North.

If and when the plan is finally accepted by the Government, and the Harbour Engineer receives the necessary authorisation to proceed full speed ahead, it is proposed first of all to construct the Northern Wharf—which

incorporates the present North Jetty, and at the same time to throw a rubble mound across the Bay from the Breakwater, which rubble mound would form the heart of the East Quay and which would ultimately provide the fourth side of the enclosed dock, and also the entrance proper. Concurrently it is hoped to get sanction to proceed with the construction of the South Quay—that is the one running parallel with the inshore portion of the South Breakwater and the Dom Pedro Jetty. This will make available for immediate use the full enclosed basin, and it will then be possible to proceed with the development of the full scheme, having first made provision for the berthing of steamers against the Northern Wharf, and, with the aid of a construction against the outer face of the Eastern Wharf (oil tanker wharf) having provided for the accommodation of oil ships.

By the end of the year 1933 at least—provided the Government grant early permission to proceed with the scheme—Port Elizabeth people will be able to tie up the mail boats against the wharf and enable passengers to step directly ashore. It will also mean that from the foot of Jetty Street they will be able to walk or ride two thousand five hundred feet out to sea and meet their friends at the ships side without having recourse to tugs.

It is understood that over and above the capital amount already expended on the construction of the Southern Breakwater, the outer work planned in the Craig Scheme can be constructed at a cost of about two millions sterling, giving a total approximate capital expenditure of three and a half millions sterling, a figure which includes the cost of construction of the South Breakwater. In addition of the fact that this means an enormous saving in prime charges, it is also contended that the scheme will enable the port authorities to earn valuable revenues in other directions, such as the lease of existing stores which will become redundant, the lease of ground embraced in the reclaimed area and the lease of oil storage tank sites. In the latter connection, it has been estimated that the East London authorities will receive in rents a sum approaching ten thousand sterling per annum. These revenues will naturally go to reduce the amount the harbour will have to earn in order to meet the annual bill for interest, redemption and depreciation.

south african timber for architectural purposes

by nils b. eckbo, m.f.

Architects are the country's bulwarks when it comes to good judgment and good taste in town planning generally, erection of buildings of all sorts as well as the very furniture we have in our daily use. Within the limits of funds available they can give their imagination free play, venting their individualities in the creation of objects of beauty.

The early architects in this country left their mark in many of the delightfully designed buildings in the Cape. Gabled buildings treasuring unique woodwork made by craftsmen from local resources in the way of Stinkwood, Yellowwood and several others. Nothing is more delightful than those buildings with their massive old floors, heavy beam ceilings, the black framed stinkwood doors and the appropriately designed furniture that is almost priceless to-day.

Without detracting in any way from the accomplishments of the present day architect, I think it can be accepted that their predecessors left their stamp on the country in the way of numerous land marks that have found a warm spot in the hearts of the people. Since those good old days a great change has come over the country. The local timbers have fallen into disuse and the modern building has developed into a strange structure as far as wood is concerned, with Baltic deal from the Scandinavian countries or Russia, "Oregon" and clear pine from the western United States or Canada, teak from India or Burma and some oak at least from Japan. The building has been turned into a sort of cosmopolitan structure shouting to us in many foreign tongues instead of the vernaculars of this country, Dutch, English or Bantu.

Indigenous Forests

Judging by the past history and present conditions one would be led to believe that the local forests have passed out but that is decidedly not the case. There are large forests in the Knysna region, as well as in the King Williamstown district of the Cape. The Tonti and Insikeni bushes in the Transkei are fairly extensive, there are

a few in Zululand and numerous small patches in Natal.

The Transvaal has important forests near the well known Wylies Port, Mahoebas Kloof, Mariepskop as well as others and it is only the Orange Free State that has no resources of this nature.

The total area of high and scrub forests in the Union is roughly estimated at one million acres.

In addition to the above there are very extensive areas of what is usually known as Savannah type of forests. These are very open, containing scattered trees of small size. The Transvaal bush and low veld comprises hundreds of square miles of this type that produce a great deal of timber in the aggregate.

The indigenous forests are protected as far as practicable from fire and the cutting of trees in the Government forests is regulated with a view to maintaining a fairly equal annual cut in perpetuity.

As the mature trees are removed, their places are usually occupied by a younger generation of trees already present or by numerous seedlings, and the regeneration takes place in a natural way.

In regard to extensions to the forests, this problem has been subjected to study for many years, but due to difficulties in afforesting with the indigenous species as well as their very slow growth they have not been extended materially.

It is of interest to note in this connection that 50,000 plants of the more valuable indigenous species were actually planted out last year, and there are now about 150,000 plants available for further planting.

It may be surmised from the foregoing that the indigenous forests are considered a commercial resource worthy of careful management; their beneficial influence on run off is acknowledged as well as their value for scenic and recreational purposes.

Unlike most other countries that only produce a limited number of timber, South Africa produces a multitude of species varying in colour from white, and almost through the degradations of the rainbow, to black.

What a field of possibilities this opens up for the Architect interested in the decorative and what an opportunity it offers to get away from the painted or stained woods and the dull Indian teak.

Some of the timbers are light in weight, but the majority is heavy, hard and of tremendous strength.

Some the Meritorious Indigenous Timbers

Stinkwood (*Ocotea bullata*).—The premier furniture wood of the Union growing in the Cape, Transkei, Natal and Transvaal. The wood is sometimes black or variegated like black walnut but more often grayish when freshly cut. It darkens on exposure, takes a natural sheen that is sometimes referred to as "bottled sunshine." The wood shrinks twenty per cent. to thirty per cent. in volume while drying, which indicates the great necessity for correct seasoning. The dry weight of the wood is fifty-two pounds per cubic foot.

Yellowwood (*Podocarpus* sp.).—There are three species growing in the Cape, Transkei, Natal and Transvaal. The most plentiful of South African trees yielding logs two to three feet in diameter and thirty or more feet in length. The wood is yellow, finely textured, medium hard, weighing when dry thirty-three pounds per cubic foot. It is not durable when exposed to the weather, but is particularly suitable for internal work in the way of joinery, flooring, ceiling, and inexpensive furniture. Used at present largely for sleepers and coffin boards.

Kejaat (*Pterocarpus angolensis*).—A fairly plentiful tree in the North Eastern Transvaal producing logs twelve inches to eighteen inches diameter and eight feet to ten feet in length. The wood is dark brown with a conspicuous grain presenting a beautiful appearance. It is slightly harder than Burmese teak but fairly easily worked. The wood is extremely durable against decay as well as white ants and since it furthermore has an abnormally small shrinkage it can be used with safety under very adverse conditions. It is recommended for furniture, high class

joinery, including outside doors and windows. It weighs when dry forty-two pounds per cubic foot.

Black Ironwood (*Olea laurifolia*).—Next to the Yellowwood this is the most abundant tree in the Knysna forest and many of the others. Logs are obtainable twelve inches to eighteen inches in diameter and twenty or more feet long. The wood has a very characteristic black marking in the portion coming from the centre of the trees that gives an irregularly streaked appearance of an extraordinary nature. As the name indicates it is extremely hard, heavy, strong and durable, weighing when dry from fifty-seven to sixty-one pounds per cubic foot. It is an excellent wagon wood and is also suitable for parquette or strip flooring on account of its striking appearance and excellent wearing qualities. Recent experiments in Great Britain show that it may be used to advantage for turnery, more particularly decorative articles. The use of this wood for railway sleepers has now been discontinued which means that large quantities of timber will be available for superior purposes.

White Ironwood (*Vepris lanceolata*).—A fairly common evergreen tree in the Eastern Cape and Natal, producing logs at times over two feet in diameter and twenty feet in length. The wood is white, close grained, tough, weighing when dry fifty-three pounds per cubic foot, but it not durable. It has been used largely for wagon building purposes and makes excellent handles of many kinds. It has even been tried for golf shafts and fishing rods with a fair degree of success.

Wit Els (*Platylophus trifolius*).—A fairly plentiful evergreen tree in the Knysna district that does not usually grow to large dimensions. The wood has an indefinite brownish-yellowish colour with little or no figure. It works easily, being of medium hardness, has a characteristic odour, very durable and weighs when dry thirty-seven pounds per cubic foot. It has a local reputation of being a very good furniture timber and has also been used for joinery and boat-building.

Rooi Els (*Cunonia capensis*).—It occurs as an evergreen tree up to fifty feet in height and three feet in diameter throughout the Cape and occasionally in Natal. The wood is reddish, even grained, hard, strong, durable, weighing forty-nine pounds per cubic foot. It is suitable for furniture and turnery.

Wilde Sering (*Burkea africana*).—A common deciduous tree of the Transvaal bushveld, capable of producing small, usually crooked, logs say six inches to twelve inches diameter by four feet to eight feet in length. The wood has a dark brown heart that changes through peculiar degradations to the whitish sapwood that is not easily distinguishable. It has a very attractive grain, is hard, durable, weighing approximately forty-nine pounds per cubic foot when dry. On account of its beautiful appearance, hardness and the durability of the heartwood, this timber is becoming very popular for parquette flooring blocks.

Tamboti (*Spirostachys africanus*).—Also a characteristic deciduous tree of the Transvaal bushveld, fifteen feet to thirty feet high by eight inches to fifteen inches diameter, but not plentiful. The wood is dark brown interspersed with irregular black streaks giving an exceptionally beautiful appearance, more particularly so when the grain is wavy. It is extremely hard, strong, durable and heavy, weighing, when dry, about sixty-three pounds per cubic foot. It has been used in the past for poorly made furniture of bad design with few exceptions, while it really deserves to be used for the very choicest of furniture only and high class turnery.

Cape Box and Kamassi (*Buxus Macowani* and *Gonioma kamassi*).—The former of Transkei and the latter of the Knysna district are both small trees seldom exceeding four inches to twelve inches in diameter. The woods are very similar, yellow, exceptionally even grained, very dense, heavy, taking a beautifully smooth finish. Weights, when dry, fifty-seven and fifty-two pounds respectively per cubic foot. They have both been regularly exported for many years for engravers work,

foot rules, handles, inlay work and many turnery purposes, Kamassi being especially used for shuttles.

Of the many other indigenous woods I would mention the well-known Sneezeewood (*Pteroxylon utile*). A yellowish, strong, hard, heavy wood that is almost nonperishable under any conditions. Weighs fifty-six pounds per cubic foot. Cape Beech (*Myrsine melanophleos*).—A light coloured wood with a flaky grain like oak when cut on the quarter. Weight, fifty-one pounds per cubic foot.

White Pear (*Apodytes dimidiata*) and Assegai (*Curtisia faginea*) two of the famous Knysna wagon woods. Weight, forty-five and fifty-four pounds per cubic foot respectively.

Camdeboo Stinkwood (*Celtis rhamnifolia*) that was used by the voortrekkers for their wagon tent bows. Weight, forty-seven pounds per cubic foot.

Wild Chestnut (*Calodendron capense*) and Dog Plum (*Ekebergia capensis*) both light coloured hardwoods suitable for a great number of general purposes. Weight, forty-one pounds per cubic foot.

Matumi (*Adina galpini*).—Grown to very large size in the Northern Transvaal. The wood is brownish, hard, close grained, strong, durable. Greasy to the touch, used for guide blocks on the mines. Weight, fifty-seven pounds per cubic feet.

There are many other species that could be mentioned but the foregoing will indicate that this country has a great variety to choose from. Timbers of many colours, some easily worked others hard, heavy, durable and particularly suitable when strength is desired.

To be continued.

R.I.B.A.

Competition for New Headquarters

The result of the competition for the design of the new Headquarters of the Royal Institute of British Architects has been announced as follows :—

First (Premium of £500) : Mr. G. Grey Wornum, F.R.I.B.A. (London).

Second (Premium of £300) : Mr. Verner O. Rees, F.R.I.B.A. (London).

Premiums of £150 each : Messrs. Brian O'Rorke and Kenneth Peacock, A.A.R.I.B.A. (London) ; Messrs. Percy Thomas and Ernest Prestwich, F.F.R.I.B.A. (Cardiff) ; Messrs. Frank Roscoe, A.R.I.B.A., and Duncan Wylson (London).

The Jury of Assessors have highly commended the designs submitted by the following competitors :—

Mr. R. Furneaux Jordan, A.R.I.B.A. (Birmingham).

Mr. Horace L. Massey, A.R.I.B.A. (Auckland, New Zealand).

Messrs. E. A. A. Rowse and Jeffryes and Carnegie, A.A.A.R.I.B.A. (Edinburgh).

Messrs. Vine and Vine, A.A.R.I.B.A. (London).

Messrs. Richardson and Gill, F.F.R.I.B.A. (London).

Messrs. L. H. Bucknell, F.R.I.B.A., and E. W. Armstrong, A.R.I.B.A., and Miss M. F. R. Ellis, A.R.I.B.A. (London).

Messrs. Scarlett and Ashworth, A.A.R.I.B.A. (London).

The Award of the Jury of Assessors is signed by Mr. Robert Atkinson, F.R.I.B.A., Mr. Charles Holden, F.R.I.B.A., Mr. H. V. Lancaster, F.R.I.B.A., and Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, R.A., F.R.I.B.A. The Fifth Assessor, Dr. Percy Worthington, F.R.I.B.A., was unfortunately not able to take part in the judging of the designs owing to illness.

Mr. Howden at the R.I.B.A.

Speaking at the Annual General Meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects in London, on the 9th May, Mr. Robert Howden said : Mr. President and Gentlemen,—On behalf of the South African Institute of Architects, which I represent, I thank you very much for this kindly welcome. I think we look upon ourselves as the youngest Affiliated

Society of this Institute. In one sense that is so, Sir, but I think that in another sense we might be permitted to call ourselves the parent body, and that is in regard to registration, for we were the first part of the British Empire to obtain a Statutory Qualification. We have had some twenty-five years' experience of registration, of which, at a more opportune time than the present, I shall be glad to give some information. We have been less unfortunate than you were in your Bill, though even we have not been as successful as we anticipated we should be when we approached Parliament for our Act. The Rhodesian people have been still more successful than we have been ; that is to say they have been able to obtain an Act which protects not only the title but also the practice of the architect, and that, you will agree, is a very great step forward indeed, and it is one which we hope you also, in time, will be able to take. Our particular difficulty was that Parliament, at the time, could not see its way to assist us other than with a Bill, that is to say, they could not make it a Government Bill, but they said they would give us their moral support. Since then we have been fortunate enough to have a Minister of Education who has also been Minister of the Interior and who has taken an interest in our education policy. We have two Universities, one at Witwatersrand, the other at the Cape, which are under his control, and he feels that those Universities are for the sole object of producing the future men of our country, and that it is his duty to see that the students are looked after. We hope that in due course he will influence the Government to introduce a Bill to support the question of protecting the practice of the architect as well as the title. I mention that, Sir, as an indication of the way in which it is possible to get a Government, in time, to see that it is in its own interests and in the interests of the country to introduce such legislation.

If there be any members here who are doubtful as to the advantages of registration I can only say that, from our twenty-five years' experience, we have come to the conclusion that, even at the present moment, regardless of what future generations are going to have, that registration and statutory qualification is a success, both to the public and to the profession. I thank you very much.



an architects' office

walls • french grey

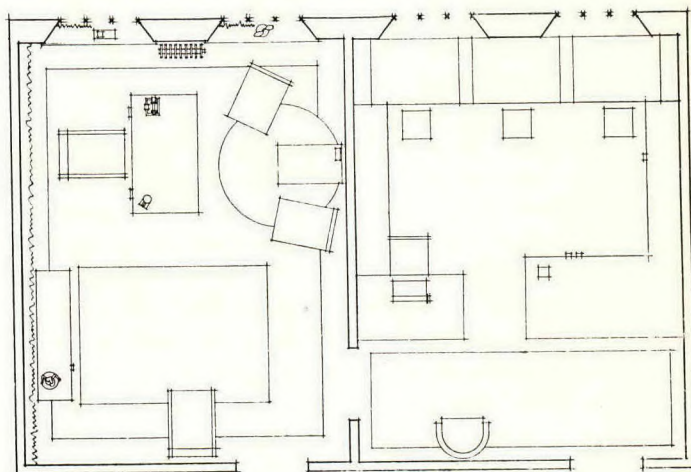
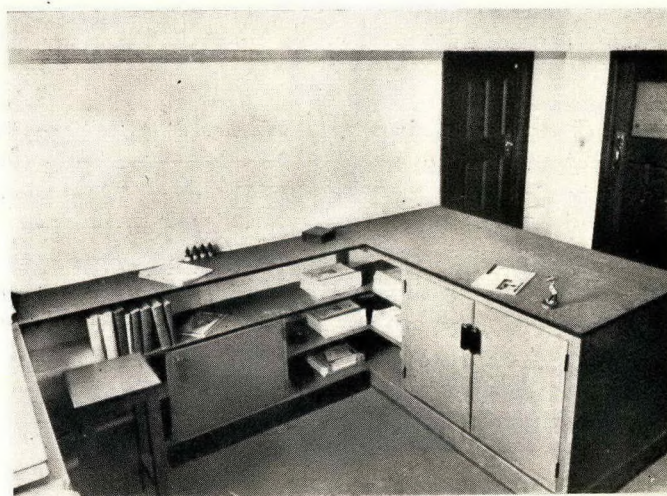
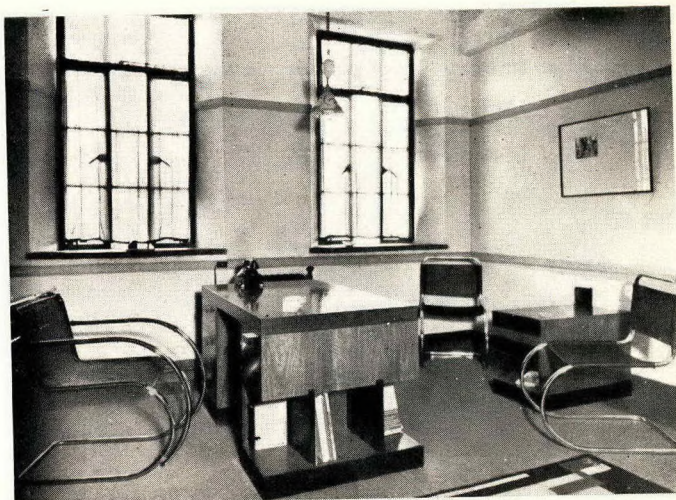
curtains and hangings • maroon silk

furniture • calcausian walnut waxed

carpet • maroon, french grey, parchment

steel chairs • chromium plated, with cane

glass figure by venturini venice



1. private office
2. drawing office
3. layout

architects
hanson & finkelstein with s. n. tomkin • johannesburg

professional notes and news

Pretoria Local Committee Kalendar July 4th: Committee Meeting ; 8th Exhibition of works of students at Pretoria University during 1931-1932, and Exhibition of Drawings by local architects and P.W.D., 8 p.m. ; 15th Lecture : "Cinemas," by A. S. Furner, A.R.I.B.A. ; 20th : Visit to Capitol Theatre, Inspection of Ventilating Plant ; 26th : Visit Plaza Theatre, Inspection of Ventilating Plant.

Benevolent Fund

The Trustees gratefully acknowledge receipt of contributions from the following: Messrs. Kallenbach, Kennedy and Furner, J. F. Lambert, Obel and Obel.

Mr. Chas. Hosking, member of the Institute of Architects, whose death we regret to record took place on May 27th, was 77 years of age. Born at Melbourne, he practised in Australia as an architect and came to South Africa in the "nineties." He was registered as a member of the Association of Transvaal Architects as far back as 1909. His work included the winning of the first prize for the Krugersdorp Town Hall and the subsequent carrying out of the building.

We regret that, through an oversight, the name of Mr. D. Ivor Lewis, to which reference was made last month in this column was printed A. D. Lewis. Mr. D. Ivor Lewis is now living in Wales.

The Witwatersrand Central Juvenile Affairs Board, in view of the seriousness of unemployment among boys and girls at the present time wishes to point out to all employers of labour that it has a number of juveniles waiting for jobs. Any of our readers who need employees should call at 22/23, New Law Courts, the offices of the Board, or phone 5080 Central for boys and 7016 Central for girls when arrangements can be made to interview the applicants.

Mr. John Stockwin Cleland, M.B.E., F.R.I.B.A., succeeded Mr. J. A. Macphail as Union Secretary for Public Works, on June 13th. He started his career by being articled to a well-known firm of architects in Birmingham. After serving his articles, he had experience with several firms in the course of

which he, on behalf of his firm, was engaged on the design for the exhibition hall to house the trophies collected by Selous, the great African hunter.

Mr. Cleland arrived in South Africa in 1908, joined the firm of Mack, in Capetown, and remained with the firm for several years. His plan in the competition for the Pretoria Post Office was highly commended. In 1909, he became a temporary architectural assistant. His first big work was the Pretoria Post Office for which he adapted his competition plan to the requirements of the Postal authorities.

After Union, he was appointed chief architectural assistant ; in 1912 he became assistant architect and on the retirement of Mr. P. Eagle, in 1920, was made chief architect, a position he has held up to the present.

He has been responsible for all the larger works carried out by the Department during the last twelve years. His latest plan, that for Pretoria Hospital, is well adapted for the needs of modern hospital administration. In his scheme for the proposed new hospital at Groote Schuur, Capetown, he was able to apply the results of his studies of modern hospitals in England, America and on the Continent. When the hospital is completed, it will be one of the most modern and up-to-date hospitals in the world.

The surroundings of the Union Buildings and the arrangement of the fine gardens is due, to a large extent, to his skill and foresight. Many municipalities throughout the Union have received from him considerable assistance in their town planning schemes.

Born at Walsall, Staffordshire, in 1879. Mr. Cleland was educated at Queen Mary's Grammar School and at Bishop Vesey's School, near Birmingham. He was made M.B.E. for his work in designing military hospitals in the Union during the Great War. The buildings were, naturally, of a temporary nature and had to be completed in record time.

Mr. Cleland has always been interested in Arts and Crafts and many sculptors, carvers and mural decorators owe much to his interest in their work. He has also done a good deal to foster the use of South African products such as slate, marble and native timber. He is also a keen Rotarian and is on the Executive of that body.

The Institute of South African Architects

The Standing Committee on Education and 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.

The addresses of the following members of the Transvaal Provincial Institute are unknown and should any member have knowledge of these addresses it is requested that the Secretary be advised thereof: S. Millar, L. B. Preller, J. A. Oxener, P. C. Roberts, C. T. Mitchell, J. W. Gaisford, H. A. Reid.

Panel for Architects

Work done for the Transvaal Provincial Administration

The following information was given by the Administrator of Transvaal in reply to a question by Mr. George Hills, M.P.C.

During the past financial year architectural work for the Transvaal Province was done by architects in private practice, and the Provincial Administration had a panel of

architects to select from. There were eighteen architects on this panel, and of them the bulk of the work was obtained by Mr. Gerard Moerdijk, of Pretoria, the amount of work assigned to him being £11,696. Eight of those on the panel received no work at all.

Work valued at £5,445 was assigned to Messrs. Cowin, Powers and Ellis, of Johannesburg, while Mr. R. Howden, of Johannesburg, received £3,756; Mr. H. W. Spicer, Johannesburg, £4,827; and Mr. D. M. Sinclair, Johannesburg, £3,017. Mr. J. R. Burg, of Pretoria, received £2,978; Mr. A. Fraser Lawrie, Pretoria, £571; Mr. G. E. Fitzgerald, Pretoria, £1,487. Mr. J. G. Kraan, £1,318, and Mr. W. G. Mackintosh, Pretoria, £798.

P. E. Notes

The Building Trade locally is exceptionally quiet and there are no indications of an early general improvement. However, we have been advised that the construction of the New Law Court Buildings will be started this month by Messrs. James Thompson & Co., of Johannesburg, and this, combined with the additional work on the north arm of the new Docks, should tend to ease the question of unemployment here.

Work on the new nine-storey "United Building" at the corner of Main Street continues, and at the time of writing, the reinforcement of the first floor columns is beginning to show above the hoarding. This hoarding is unusually neat and dignified. So often hoardings are such eyes-sores that it is surprising that City Engineers have not insisted on a higher standard.

Apart from the "United Building" (£42,000), the only works of any size in course of construction in this district are the new premises for the Standard Bank in Grahamstown (£15,000) and St. Cuthbert's Church (£5,500). The architects for the above mentioned works are Messrs. F. Owen Eaton and A. A. Tait.

Mr. Victor Jones sailed recently for England, and Mr. Herbert McWilliams for Russia.

Mr. M. D. Berman, who recently obtained his Diploma in Architecture at the University of Capetown, has started practice in Port Elizabeth.

There is a great deal of discussion at the moment as to whether the City Hall is tottering or not. "In any case it would be an excellent idea to pull it down and thereby rid the civic centre of a monstrosity," says a correspondent.

The Shopfront to the new Departmental Store of Champions, Ltd. Bloemfontein, is a notable achievement in design and use of materials. Bronze Metal, Roman Stone, Black Marble, Teak and Veneered Panels have been used by Sage & Co. to create an efficient setting for the window dresser. The frontage is modern, and designed on sound architectural principles, avoiding meaningless "stunting," which so often "dates" carelessly designed present-day work.

The frontage is a tribute to the enterprise and resourcefulness of the Client, Architect and Shopfitter.

FREDERICK

SAGE

& Co. (S.A.) LTD.
Box 777 Phone 5702/5.
Johannesburg.



MAIN ENTRANCE

Modern Arcade Shopfront for
CHAMPIONS, Ltd.,
recently erected by
FREDK. SAGE & CO. (S.A.) LTD.
Architects.
RHODES-HARRISON & FYVIE.

MAIN ARCADE

CRAFTSMEN
AND
DESIGNERS
in
BRONZE,
STAINLESS
STEEL,
WHITE
METAL,
ALUMINIUM,
GLASS,
VENEERING,
MAHOGANY,
WALNUT,
TEAK,
OAK,
MARBLE,
etc.

SAGE



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