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1914

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

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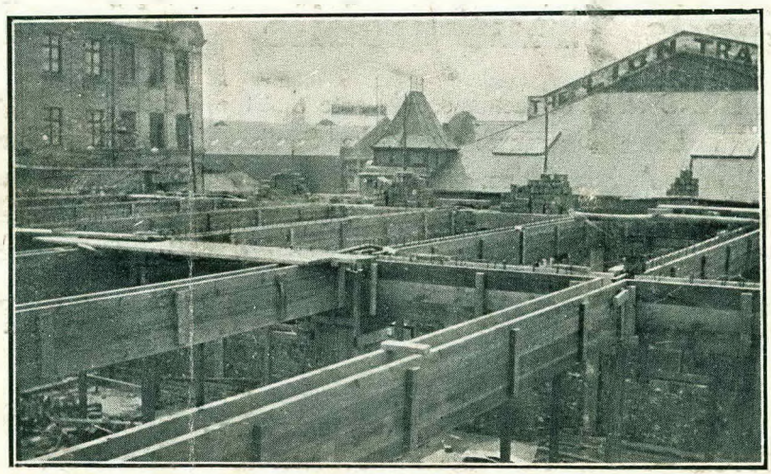
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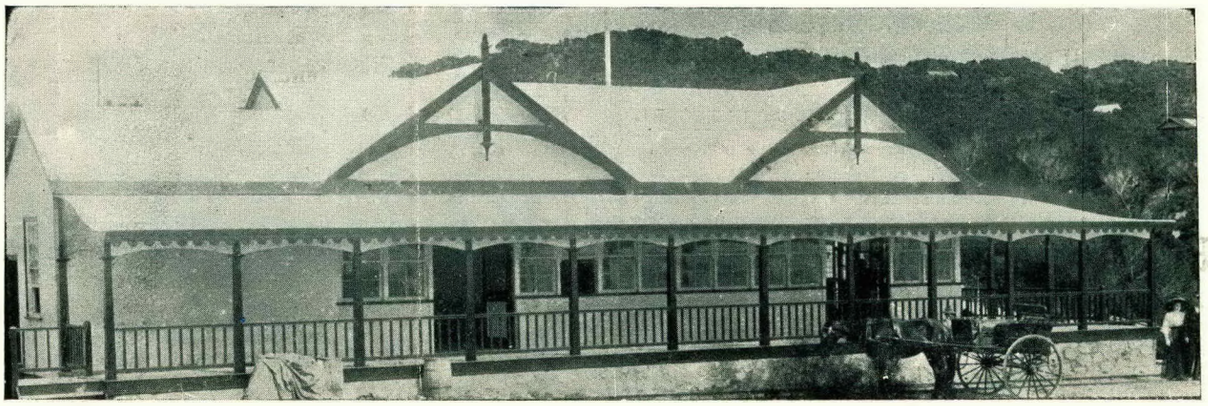
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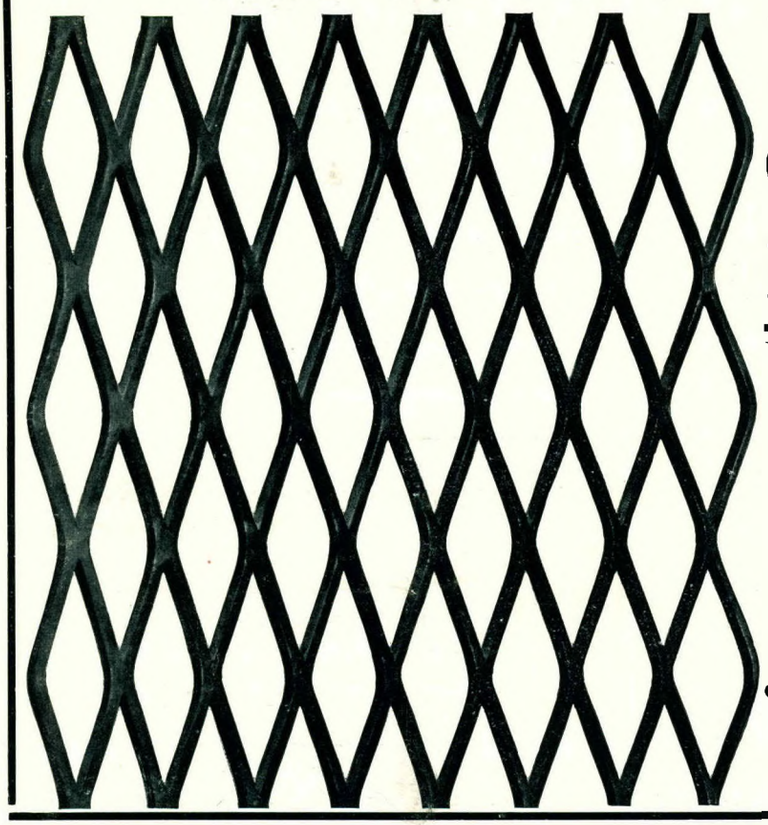
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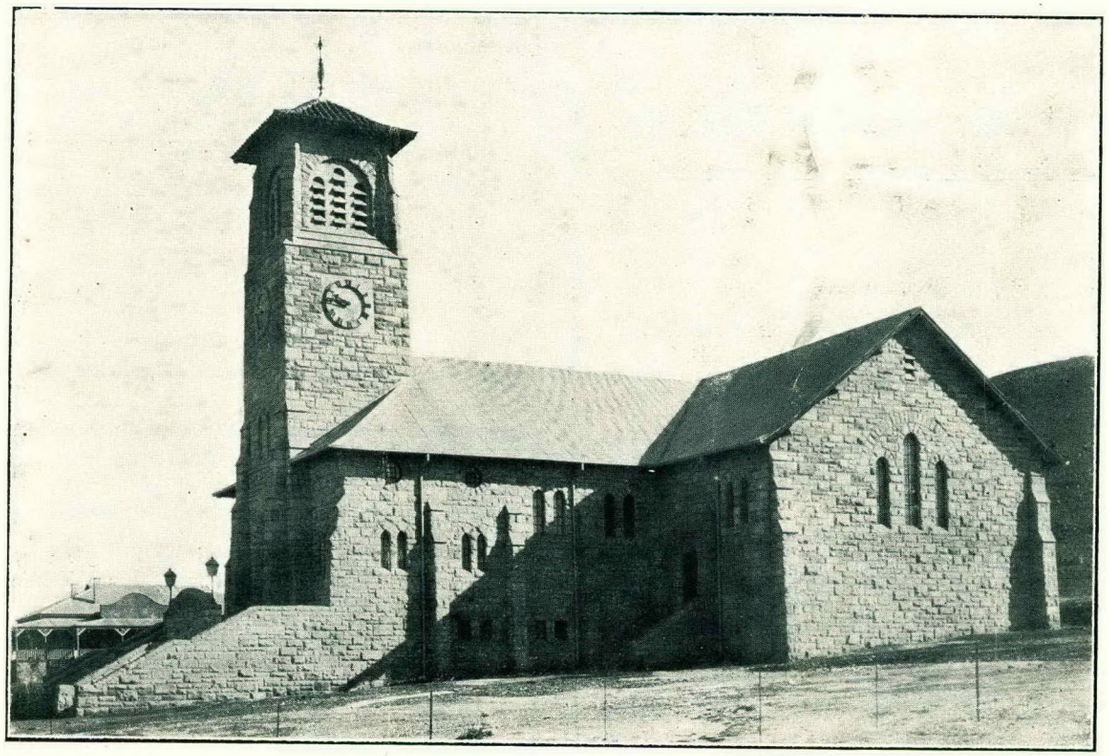
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The African Architect.

JULY, 1914. VOLUME IV. NO. 2.



NEW DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH, GREYLINGSTAD.

This Church was the subject of competition among Transvaal Architects early in 1912. Mr. Herbert Baker, F.R.I.B.A., the Assessor, awarded the 1st Premium to Messrs. Cowin and Powers, A.R.I.B.A., Architects of Pretoria, from whose designs the building has been erected at a cost of £10,000, and is a distinct departure from the style of architecture hitherto adopted for Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa. The Architects have designed this building in a simple treatment of English Gothic, as being the most suitable for a country church, using a local freestone, quarried near the site, for the walling, which has been executed in rock-faced shoddies in irregular courses, with dressed stones to windows and doorways. The Clock and Bell Tower, which forms an imposing feature, is roofed with Italian pattern tiles manufactured at Vereeniging. The Church possesses a very fine Organ, built by Mr. W. Kemp of Pietermaritzburg, costing £1,100. The organ chamber, which is placed above the vestries, provides for the organ in two sections. The great organ and swell organ being placed one on either side of the Rostrum, while the Console is on the floor of the Church central and immediately below the Rostrum The Rostrum Front, Organ Case and Organ Console are executed in Teak, from the Architects' design. The difficulty in providing artificial lighting for a building of this description has been met by installing a petrol air gas plant, executed by Messrs. Barker and Smith of Pietermaritzburg. The Pendants and Fittings, which are of black iron with incandescent burners, were supplied by Messrs. Hughes & Co., Architectural Specialists, of Johannesburg. The General Contractor for the work was Mr. G. van Reenen Mostert of Pretoria. Mr. J. T. Warren acted as Clerk of Works.

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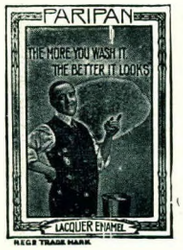
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New Town Hall for Maitland, Cape Town.

Mr. John Parker, Mayor of Capetown, recently performed the opening ceremony in connection with Maitland's new Town Hall. He said it gave him the greatest pleasure possible to come down to Maitland to open their new hall. He congratulated the residents on having such a fine assembly room in which they could meet for social and other public purposes. He thought it was a fine example of the public spirit of Maitland in erecting such a structure, and it was quite in keeping with the larger loyalty that should follow their incorporation with the Mother City of South Africa. (Cheers.) He hoped it would not be long before the buildings which had been erected to serve as municipal offices would also be utilised for the purposes of a public library, where the residents might come to read the literature of the day and scan the daily papers.

Description of Building.

The hall is designed on Renaissance lines, with that simple dignity and repose so often lacking in our public and other buildings; it forms a perfect and fitting artistic ornament to its immediate surroundings. It contains a fine assembly hall, seating 450 people on the ground floor and 120 in the gallery. This hall is roofed with a "waggon-headed" ceiling in steel, and the acoustic properties have been provided for by the main trusses projecting below the ceiling in the shape of curved ribs, supported on stone corbels, thus forming an ornamental finish and effectually providing breaks which intercept the sound waves and so prevent echo. The provision of a large and roomy stage may here be specially mentioned, which is suitably arranged for dramatic performances and provided with dressing rooms, lavatories, kitchen and other convenient offices in connection therewith.

The principal façade faces the Main Road, from which it is well set back, allowing for a broad drive up to the main entrance and columned portico, on the right and left of which are various offices, cloakrooms, etc., leading off from the central vestibule. In addition to this main entrance, private entrances are separately arranged to these offices, and a strongroom has been constructed in a basement storey to accommodate records and valuable documents of the district. One of the special features of the building is the arrangement of double entrances provided at each end of the structure, whereby audiences can enter from either the Main Road or from the railway station, and in addition to these there are emergency doors to further enable rapid and easy exit when required. Some interest is attached to the reinforced concrete gallery, and the manner in which the architect, Mr. C. H. Smith, A.R.I.B.A., has contrived to arrange it in one clear span, and also the compact arrangement of the bioscope operator's room, placed immediately behind the gallery on the outside of the building, the whole being in absolutely fire-proof construction. There are doors leading from the gallery on to a promenade roof extending over the front block of buildings, and a similar promenade is arranged at the reverse end, and overlooking the railway station. These roof promenades, with all the main construction of the work, together with stairs to gallery, are all executed in reinforced concrete, which the architect has introduced with such success into so many buildings at the Cape and other parts of the Union, and which scientific system of construction is now being so extensively used in all the most important buildings of other countries.

The assembly hall is roofed with patent vulcanite shingles, producing a pleasing effect, and surmounted by a large ornamental ventilating fleche, constructed in teak, capped with sheet copper. All air shafts are gathered into this fleche, conveying the vitiated air from the various outlets connected with the system of ventilation, which in all apartments has received special consideration and attention.

An electric light installation has been installed throughout by Messrs. Woods, Westerton and Co., and a special floor laid in the assembly hall constructed on ballroom lines. In the hands of Mr. George Bradford, the builder and contractor, the work has been most thoroughly and substantially carried out in all its details, without any extra cost being incurred during the operations.

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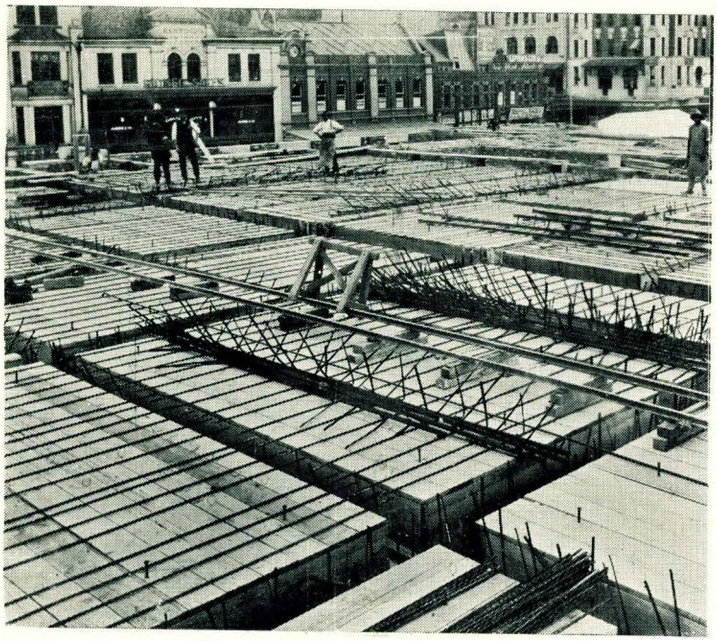


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The
African Architect

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS
OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION
IN SOUTH AFRICA

PROPRIETOR AND RESPONSIBLE EDITOR — JAS. T. BROWN

VOL. 4. NO. 2. — JULY 1914. — 10/6 PER ANNUM, POST FREE

THE TWO VOICES.

"Uniformity be damned!" said the Architect, "it's a form of degeneracy."

"That," replied the Quantity Surveyor, "is hardly an up-to-date notion."

"Say that my views belong to the Middle Ages," rejoined the Architect, "and the sneer is complete!" There was a pause. He continued. "Don't deprecate my accepting your logical meaning. It doesn't hurt me. To prove a thing 'up-to-date' is, according to modern conceit, to prove it the highest achievement in its class. So little of a modern am I, that I believe the 'up-to-date' could often be profitably exchanged for the 'out-of-date.'"

"It puzzles me," said the Quantity Surveyor, "to understand quite what you are driving at."

"Well, here—as you say—are the Master Builders agitating both profession and public with a view to securing Uniform Conditions of Contract. Uniformity, that is my objection. Make any craft or business procedure uniform, and away goes the brain and vitality of that craft or business."

"I cannot see," said the Quantity Man, "that Conditions of Contract,

uniform or otherwise, are anything but a mere instrument of business, and by no means the craft or business itself. You might as well argue that a craft will suffer by the use of tools of which the general pattern is uniform. And, you know, even in the Middle Ages there was a fair amount of uniformity in that respect."

"Thanks—but I will grant you that fact further back than the Middle Ages. Ictinus and Phidias, and before them the Pyramid Builders, probably saw masons' chisels of a pattern hardly varying in their day. But no two masons ever held a chisel exactly alike, and their methods have always varied sensibly to the temperament or mood of the chiseller, and to the temper or grain of the material. Put that same chisel into a power-driven machine, and you get the characteristic 'up-to-date' product—machine-made carving on stone and wood, machine-made furniture, etc.; all brainless, lifeless, unvarying, and capable of repetition *ad infinitum*, like the tunes on the barrel-organ and the pianola. My poor mediaeval soul cannot stifle a groan at these depravities—these uniformities—of modern so-called Art."

"Well, sir!" laughed the Quantity Surveyor, "I will not trespass within your province of Art. But you will admit that Building, as carried out to-day, is a matter of Business—often of very keen business—and that a mechanical uniformity tends to success and efficiency of procedure in Business."

There was a pause before the Architect replied. Then he said slowly—"That question would require a book for full answer. More shortly, the answer is both Yea and Nay! If you doubt that Nay, I have to remind you that Business has its Art side—oh no! I am not pulling the argument on to architecture! You may call that Art side, if you choose, the *Romance* of Business; there are the small and the great romances, and they proceed out of individual resource, inventiveness, and enterprise—the magic of the tiny human brain! And as a Business Man—if I had the right to call myself one—my objection to uniform conditions of contract would be the advantage given to the lazy Building Contractor, as well as to the lazy Architect; too lazy, that is, to use their brains. Moreover, the really great business of building can hardly be confined within the rigid inelastic principles of a contract which will be uniformly applicable to great and small, to all conditions and requirements."

"Master Builders say it can!" said the Quantity Surveyor, "And you will not say, judging upon achievements, that South African Master Builders are fools. No, I thought not Sir!"

"No!" said the Architect, "I have the greatest respect for them. So, however, I also have for the architects of the United States. Week by week, their professional journals illustrate the deadly uniformity of their modern public buildings. Applied Order and Cornice everywhere, to Banks, Post Offices, Schools and Capitols: Orders diminutive, Orders normal, and Orders most gargantuan! All grinding out the same tune! It's the way to 'make a pile quick,' I suppose. But even that is bad business, for there will be a recoil which must affect the entire profession. At present, I read, they are seriously considering a proposition to standardise public buildings! Perhaps, in their own sphere, our Master Builders wish to parallel these exploits."

"Would it not be fairer," urged the Quantity Surveyor, "to say that, so far from that being the case, they are endeavouring to profit by a summation of their individual experiences? It has not always been the Builders' lot to find fair Conditions of Contract awaiting him after the acceptance of his tender, and a few here and there have been ruined by what may be termed a legal trap."

"I know those legal traps. There is one for the architect in our Institute's form. I got caught four years ago, and have not used it since."

"Well," said the Quantity Surveyor, "we are both invited to a round-table conference, as delegates from our respective Institutes, to discuss this matter with the Builders. Don't you think there is something of good to be achieved? After all, the Courts give judgment on all kinds of Building Contracts nowadays, and those judgments get quoted as precedents on quite other Contracts. And you know what the Law is."

There was a long pause.

"I shall attend the Conference," said the Architect.

TOWN PLANNING.

BEAUTY A HUMAN DOCUMENT.

THE "GRAND MANNER" FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

BY MR. HERBERT BAKER.

The Imperial Health Conference and Exhibition, which was held at the Imperial Institute in May last, under the auspices of the Victoria League, was notable in exemplifying the practical character of the work which the League is pursuing in the Dominions. At the opening session, after the Countess of Jersey, who is the president of the League, had welcomed the delegates, the Conference was opened by Mr. Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and then an address was given by Lord Bryce, late our Ambassador to the United States. Subsequent sessions were devoted to the discussion of the three subjects which the Conference had been called to consider. They were : Housing and town-planning, the care of child-life, and the child as wage-earner. South Africa made a substantial contribution to the discussion in the paper on town-planning by Mr. Herbert Baker, and that on workmen's houses and model dwellings in South Africa by Mr. J. M. Solomon.

Mr. Baker's paper was as follows :—

A New Science, but an Old Art.

In Greece the city, which was there the State, was defined as a place "where people live a common life for noble ends." To the ever-widening tendency of the national entity due to the political growth of nations and the shrinkage of the world, resulting from the inventions of mechanical science, and the consequent weakening of civic patriotism, the difficulties in the way of the creation of beautiful cities can no doubt be largely attributed. Against this loss of civic patriotism can be set, as a gain, the increased knowledge of the subject of civic hygiene and town-planning, which has grown by such leaps and bounds during the present generation. It is a new science, but the Renaissance of an old art.

From the hygienic point of view, the problem is a less acute one in the new countries of the Empire than in the old. There have been few restraints in the selection of sites for the cities of the nations of the new world. Those which have been chosen for reasons of defence, as in older civilisations, have been the exception rather than the rule. The cramped sites which the enclosing walls of fortifications demanded, with their attendant evil of narrow winding streets, have therefore in the main been avoided. Air and sunlight is, or could be, the birthright of every Colonial-born child. We Colonials must be thankful for all this. But the rocks ahead are none the less, and this congress will have proved of inestimable value to the Empire if, by helping to forewarn, it may teach the

citizens of the Dominions to forearm themselves against dangers which a want of knowledge and foresight may so easily bring upon them in the future.

We were told at the International Town-Planning Conference of 1910 that in the most congested area of New York there are 750 or 1,000 persons per acre, in Paris 430, and in London, which we all know is bad enough, 360. Who, two generations ago, could have thought that New York, which must then have been almost a garden city, would have become at the present day, in parts at least, the most overcrowded city in the world? We have learned on good authority that much of the enormous sums spent annually by London's schemes of progress would not have been necessary had the splendid plan for rebuilding and replanning the city compiled by Wren, after the great fire, been adopted; or if two or three generations ago even, inspired by his plans and ideals as to what the city should have been, they had created Schools and Commissions of Town-Planning.

We have read quite recently that, even in beautiful Paris, in spite of all that the French genius achieved after the destruction which revolutions brought upon the city, the authorities have found it necessary to authorise an expenditure of forty millions, mainly for the purpose of correcting the blunders of the past. These are examples, out of multitudes, of want of foresight. On the other hand, the capital of the United States was saved by the wisdom of General Washington, who, when the city was founded, employed a French architect, L'Enfant, trained in the great school of Le Notre, the French master of landscape design, to lay out a comprehensive plan for the new Washington. It is noteworthy that a recent committee of experts reported that L'Enfant's plan could not even now be improved upon. Unfortunately, the ideals inspired by Washington and worked out by L'Enfant soon faded away, and a period of short-sighted commercialism and individualism followed. The land on the great squares and vistas, as designed by L'Enfant, was sold to the highest bidder, and used for the most inappropriate purposes, without any regard to the common weal or to the big idea. The result has been that vast sums have been recently spent on expropriation and rebuilding. A railway even had to be moved, and a new one tunnelled under the hill of the Capitol at enormous cost.

Where Municipal Committees Fail.

We can learn from every page of the history of town-planning that there is no art which in the long run is more profitable to a city, nor any field in which good seed, well sown, will ultimately reap a richer harvest. But the husbandman must relax his efforts neither in the summer of enthusiasm nor in the winter of discontent which must inevitably follow. Continuity of a definite policy spread over a long period is the essential of success. Commissions of the best men, as some English and many more American cities have come to realise, must take the place of ephemeral Municipal committees, the members of which, however excellent public servants in other respects, are not often elected for their expert knowledge nor for their long vision. The cities of our Dominions should ponder

well over the fate of the older cities of Europe, and even the comparatively modern New York, or a like fate may overtake them—nay, will most certainly do so, when their hopes of prosperity are realised, unless each city contains a body of patriotic and long-sighted citizens, who have a prophetic vision, and have the courage to work long and persistently for its realisation.

The British people have one fortunate tradition in their favour. This is the principle of "one house one family"—the cottage instead of the tenement unit—enshrined in their hearts, and it is their boast that "Every Englishman's house is his castle." At the Conference mentioned above, foreign representatives were very insistent on the value of this principle, which they looked upon as a great national asset, and advised Englishmen jealously to guard against any encroachment upon it. The Germans at the Conference pointed out that, although their tenement system produced greater uniformity of street planning, which might seem better in theory, yet it did not in practice lead to civic beauty nor to the welfare of their citizens. American experts attributed the growth of slums and unhealthiness of many of their cities to the baneful system of flats. Fortunately a sound British prejudice has prevented its introduction to any serious extent into the colonies.

The author must apologise to the Congress for the somewhat discursive and sketchy nature of this article. He attempts to deal with town-planning less from the scientific and hygienic, and more from the idealistic and artistic point of view. He is well aware, however, that art and science cannot be separated. Beauty and hygiene are as interdependent in the organism of a city as beauty and health in the human body.

Anyone who has attempted to plead the cause of Art in the city with representatives of governments and municipalities knows that he is usually met with the answer, "Oh! you can't expect us all to be artists." Now, that answer is based on a misconception of the true meaning of art. This misconception accounts for so much that is wrong at the present day in our relation to art generally, and especially to civic art. In her excellent book in the Home University Library on "Art and Ritual," Miss Harrison has shown that all art was originally based on the ritual dance, of which our old English Maypole is, or was, a survival. These dances were at their beginning the expression of the emotions of all the inhabitants of the community—hamlet, village, or town—in what was of common interest to them, change of season, fecundity, birth and death or war. Such common interests of the social unit are not entirely dead, in spite of all the adverse influences of modern civilisation, and our common feeling as a social community should still seek some expression in the creation of beautiful cities. Art is the interpretation and the expression of the life of the people; it has no real permanent existence apart from this "life": it has primarily little to do with the aesthete, the connoisseur, or the dilettante. "Art for Art's sake" is an alluring but a dangerous doctrine, which has helped little the progressive cause of art in its higher mission. It may lead us along "the primrose paths of dalliance," but not "up the steep and thorny road to heaven." Art in its wider application

includes everything which man creates for the common joy and the common weal. The well-meaning Philistines, therefore, who are too often responsible for the creation of our cities, are, in spite of their protestations to the contrary, artists after all, but, alas! very bad ones. Their work does hold "the mirror up to nature," but mirrors only the more practical or material side of our lives as citizens. The soul, or the higher and more spiritual side, too often goes unexpressed in the work of art, which is our city.

The Culture of the Greeks.

The ruins of the old cities of Greece still bear eloquent testimony to the culture of the Greeks; those of the Roman Empire to the civilisation which flowed over the world from the fountain source of Rome, and the romantic glory of mediaevalism can still be read in most of the old cities and villages of Europe. It is good for us at times to cast the mind forward and reflect what will history record of the ideals of the citizens of the British Empire of to-day.

Modern democracies, who now wield the powers once held by the more autocratic builders of the great cities of the world, have yet to realise that the political changes which have given them the power have also imposed on them corresponding obligations. They have yet to learn to emulate the taste and skill and love and pride in their city of the old despots, to whose patronage of the arts and of artists we owe those beautiful cities which are still the wonder and admiration of the world.

Mr. John Burns, the late Secretary of the Local Government Board, than whom no one has done more to advance the cause of the architectural beauty in its wider sense, which includes both the building and its setting, has said: "It is not an accident that the beautiful manor house, the restful vicarage, the stately homes of England, and the beautiful public schools and colleges, have turned out the Miltons, the Ruskins, the Kingsleys, the Morrises, the Nelsons, the Newtons. Environment in youth has an enormous influence on the personal and civic education of the future citizen." When the Town Planning Conference visited Cambridge, where the group of colleges by the river is one of the finest examples of architectural setting in the world, a French representative, on entering the great courts of Trinity College, exclaimed, "Now I understand how England gets its great men." If this necessity of artistic environment is felt so strongly in the old countries, which are comparatively overwhelmingly rich in art, how much more must the need be felt in our new civilisations in the making, which the British people are building up over the seas. While we all admire the independence and strength of character of the sons of the Dominion, we must admit that they are sometimes a little deficient in reverence and respect for what is outside their immediate lives and environment. An upbringing and training amidst surroundings of orderly architecture and landscape gardening would undoubtedly be a great factor in correcting this deficiency in their character.

It may be thought that in the new countries with their "great spaces washed

with sun," which surround every town, beauty within the city is of less importance. The love of wild nature is of comparatively modern growth. It has been generated by the intolerable oppression of the overgrown and overcrowded European cities. We know the often-quoted example of the Italian artist, Benvenuto Cellini, who, when travelling through Switzerland saw nothing but harshness and ugliness in the mountains, which is a common-place with us to regard as so beautiful. It is significant that Ruskin, with all his passionate enthusiasm for nature, should have written: "No scene is continually and untiringly loved, but one rich by joyful human labour; smooth in field, fair in garden, full in orchard; trim, sweet and frequent in homestead; ringing with voices of vivid existence." This was called forth by his attempt to imagine some mountain scenery in the Italian Alps, which grew out of its base of foothills and valleys rich in human effort and history, transported to the wild, untamed Rocky Mountains, where to him all its beauty seemed to vanish like "the baseless fabric of a vision."

The most beautiful wild natural scenery, love and value it as we must, does not wholly supply the place of beautiful cities in the training of men and nations. It cannot give us "the common life for common ends." The art and culture of Athens grew out of such a community of city life. It was the same in Alexandria and the Hellenic cities and the towns of Italy and the Netherlands. The present reaction in favour of a country life, which is caused by the ugliness and congestion of our modern cities, can, and has been, it may be thought, carried to an extreme. It is the full life in the ideal city, rather than that of the country, in spite of all its blessings, which is destined, we may well believe, to carry civilisation and culture up on to the higher plains of future progress.

New Cities of the Empire.

Nature has modelled nothing finer in scale, line, form, and colour, in stretch of plain, range of mountains, and sweep of curving sea-shore, than the view over the Cape Flats, which divide the mountains of the Peninsula of the Cape of Good Hope from those of the mainland. Yet for the completion of this beautiful picture we must wait for man to bring in the magic of his art. Until then this landscape will never make quite the same high appeal, as where art has fulfilled its mission of perfecting nature. We may compare, for instance, the valley of the Po, and, in smaller scale, the Wealds of Kent and Sussex, or for pictorial example, turn to the landscapes of Turner, which almost invariably are full of human life and art. The Cape Flats, as they are, would not have inspired Shelley with his exquisite paean written from the Euganean Hills, which look over the city and hamlet-studded plains of Padua towards the distant towers and domes of Venice. The inspiration of Table Mountain is more to prompt us, as it prompted Cecil Rhodes, to be up and doing. And it was from this base on the slopes of the mountain that he conceived the "taking of the North."

Into our new cities of the empire we want to bring the humanizing and reverent influences of art. It is not enough to turn the country into the town.

We want also the embodiment in art of the expression of man's dominance over nature. Not merely the skill of the engineer, who harnesses nature for utilitarian benefits, but that of the artists, whose highest aim is to lift and elevate mankind.

"Man is all that nature is, and more;
And in that more lies all his hopes of bliss."

In this principle of perfecting and controlling nature lies the essence of ground planning and landscape gardening. There will always be controversy between the rival claims of nature and art, yet so many good books have been written on these subjects, that no one, who carefully studies them, will have any difficulty in avoiding the falsehood of extremes between the natural and formal schools. Bacon, in his essay on Gardens, states a principle which holds good for the designing of gardens for towns, as well as of houses. In the design of gardens, he says in effect, formal art should be strictly adhered to in the immediate surrounding and setting of the house. The design should then grow less and less formal until the art of man's control of nature ultimately loses itself in nature herself. The same principle applies to city gardening. "Rus in Urbe," which inspired the early Victorian ideal, is not the best principle to follow. There may be more justification for its application in England, where nature, in her delicacy of detail, is always in herself a garden. But in drier and hotter countries, less favourable for the art of the gardener, a natural garden in the midst of a city too often degenerates into an untidy shrubbery. The attempts at "Le jardin Anglais," which have been fashionable in Continental towns, are far from encouraging. The open garden heart of Paris, from the Champs Elysees to the Bois de Boulogne, is a better example for our sunnier colonies to follow. It is the simple formal lines and masses which form a setting for and give scale and proportion to architecture and sculpture, and harmonise nature with man's handiwork.

Town planners must not be put off by the cry of extravagance. It has been shown that artistic foresight may lead to ultimate economy. Considering the problem, moreover, from the point of view of immediate economy, we find that the money lavished in most of our cities on buildings is wasted, because so little thought is given to their surroundings. We all know how beautiful gems can be ruined by bad craftsmanship in the setting. In many of our cities the most beautiful buildings lose their value for want of design and orderly arrangement in their surroundings. The town planner is the setter of architectural gems. Even a bad building may sometimes be enhanced in value by its setting at the end of a vista, by its framing in studied masses of foliage, or by its reflection in water.

Arranging New Townships.

In dealing with the simple case of the unambitious new township, it should not be a very difficult or expensive matter for the supervising engineer or surveyors, who should be trained in a school of town planning, to arrange that all public buildings for which provision must be made—church, school, hall—should have spaces left for them at the end of vistas or of open spaces, or where they

would most tell in the general effect. In the gridiron plan, which is most commonly adopted in our Colonial towns, all we usually see at the end of the much-vaunted long straight streets is a mass of wires, poles and iron verandah posts, or the dust or nothingness of distance. The facades of buildings are seldom seen as the designer intended. In looking along a street, the perspective is so sharp that it is only the simplest architectural features that have any value, and these only, if they are not lost, as is too often the case, in a riot of wasteful ornament.

The town planner in the Southern Dominion of the Empire generally has to deal with excessive sunshine and a dry climate. This emphasises the need that the city should have something of the character of an oasis in the desert. The problems which he has to deal with are those which faced the Roman and the Mohammedan Empire in the South and East. Arab poets have recorded the love they felt for the beauty of the " Garden City " Damascus, encircled by its desert hills. We can well imagine their enthusiasm for Palermo, " the shell of gold," where, as they sang, " the oranges hung in the gardens like golden lamps in an emerald sky."

Every South African or Australian who wishes to design a garden in a dry, hot climate should read Mrs. Villiers Stuart's book on "The Garden of the Great Moghals." In it she describes the gardens of the north of India. She rightly points out that the design of the plans, which produce such beautiful results, were primarily based on the need of irrigating, by means of flooding the beds and lawns, without the untidy water leads or " sluits " which are generally inseparable from an irrigated garden. She recalls how Babar, half-Turk and half-Mongol, the founder of the great Moghul Empire in India, who spent his youth alternately in hunting and being hunted by his enemies in the desert highlands of Ceneral Asia, was so captivated by the beauties of the garden city of Samarkand, during a short occupation after his conquest of it, that later in life, when he ruled India, he himself planned and laid-out gardens such as had not been seen in India before. The Taj Mahal, so justly famed for its beauty, may be equalled or surpassed in mere skill of architecture by many Mohammedan tombs in Persia or Egypt. The amazing appeal, which the Taj Mahal at Agra makes to the imagination of all who see it, is probably less due to its architecture and the romance of its building than to its effect as a whole, the jewelled buildings in their magic setting of its formal garden.

Rhodes' Doctrine of Ransom.

Shall we, with our English birthright of beautiful gardens, fall short of the Arab and the Turk in our share of man's great duty of leaving the earth more beautiful than we found it? This sense of creating an ordered oasis in the desert was very strong in Cecil Rhodes. At Kimberley, during the siege, he laid out a mile of avenue of vines and orange trees, nourished by water pumped from a mine. Had he lived, he intended to build an open white marble column temple enclosing a pool of water, the whole embowered in lotus, papyrus, and the bright flowering canna—like another " fountain Arethuse " of the Greeks at Syracuse. It was a

part of Rhodes' "doctrine of ransom" that those who defaced the fair features of nature for their own profit should put back some of the wealth they obtained from her in adding to her beauty in the form of art. May his noble example thus inspire other great men in the untamed lands, which are waiting for the civilising touch of human art in the great inheritance of the British Empire.

Mrs. Browning beautifully and truly says. "God's finger touched, but did not press, in making England." But in making the new countries of the Empire beyond the Seas, the Great Artificer has "pressed" and moulded into Titanic forms the great rough landscape of mountain and prairie, kopje and veld. It is there the greater duty of man to use to the full the divine gift of art with which he has been so highly endowed. He must employ the bigger and simpler methods which are known as "the grand manner" in his landscape and civic art. Those who live in such climates know how the clear atmosphere of midday destroys all sense of scale and perspective in a landscape. Ranges of hills, perhaps miles apart, appear often in the same plane. Frame these toneless landscapes with architecture or tree masses, give them scale by objects of architecture or sculpture or planting, and then, as if by magic, they all take on a different aspect. It has been interpreted and focussed to our human understanding.

It is often our experience that where Nature does least, man, according to his means, does most. Where the endowments of nature have been most lavish, we often find an absence of that restlessness or divine discontent which spurs us on to great achievement. There is hope, therefore, in the human material. Knowledge and enlightenment alone are wanted, and the Victoria League is to be congratulated on the help which it has given by means of this Congress towards the advancement of civic and landscape art in the British Empire.

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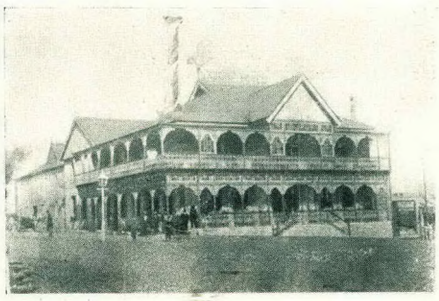
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Quantity Surveyors Dine.

Necessity for Town Planning.

Employment of South Africa's Youths.

The third annual banquet of the South African Institute of Quantity Surveyors was held recently at the New Club, Mr. Everard White presiding over a good attendance. Among those present were the Mayor (Mr. Norman Anstey), Messrs. J. F. Beardwood, R. Howden, J. Thompson, Major L. Forsyth Allan, Messrs. Jno. Taylor, G. S. Burt-Andrews, J. J. Kirkness, E. Waugh, J. Holdcroft (President of the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce), C. F. Stallard Cook (Mayor of Boksburg), Thos. Clark, Walter Reid, N. P. Cowin, D. Pattison, W. Hawke, McKinlay, E. Schaerer, Francis Black, J. Cowling, Nicolay, W. Nottingham, Hickman, D. Sinclair, R. Tweeddale-Hogg, Jas. T. Brown, W. J. Parrack, Veale, T. Douglas, J. B. D. Clark, Harrison, E. Bird, E. Glover, and others.

After the loyal toast, Mr. H. Belljohn submitted the toast of "The Architects of South Africa." Everyone who knew anything about the matter would, he said, know that the Association of Architects and the Institute of Architects were most certainly powers for good in this community and worthy of all the support they might be able to give. Whether it was necessary to have two so similar institutions was perhaps doubtful, and, speaking for himself as an architect, but as a member of neither body, he might say he rather believed in concentration of effort. There were many fields for enterprise the more easily to be conquered if the attacking forces were united. There was first the promotion of an Arbitration Board. The matter had already been given publicity, but nothing tangible appeared to have been done. It was well worth an effort to establish such a Board. Then there was the establishment of a Town Planning Board for all their larger municipalities, on which the architects would be largely and the quantity surveyors reasonably represented. He thought the officials of the various Councils were broad-mined enough not to despise the advice of such a Board, and the various Town Councils would find the help of a number of level-headed professional men a great asset. For obvious reasons this was not the time for details, but it was time to begin a move in this direction. At present a member of the Council of the R.I.B.A., who was an expert in town planning, was engaged on a lecturing tour on this subject in Australia, and they must not be behind in the matter. The sensitive and nervous energy which seemed inseparable from the artistic temperament was always seeking some outlet, and although they had many individual examples of fine architecture, the time was ripe for the consideration of this wider subject of town plan-

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ning in its many and varied aspects. In the architects of South Africa they had a body of men who should be able, if they began at once, to leave their mark, not only in individual buildings, but in the streets, parks and general lay-out of their towns and cities, not only in those already large, but in those small townships which were constantly being laid out at the present time. (Applause.)

Architects and Federation.

Replying to the toast, Mr. J. F. Beardwood, President of the Transvaal Association of Architects, said that federation had been before the voluntary bodies for some time. They were also on the point of electing an advisory body. It would be chosen by all the Architects' Associations in South Africa, and would, therefore, be thoroughly representative. The speaker then referred to the standard method of measuring devised after considerable labour by the Quantity Surveyors' Institute. They hoped that architects would agree with them in uniformly adopting that system. Discussion with that view had been opened with the various architectural institutes, which, he hoped, would ultimately meet the quantity surveyors on this matter. Quantity surveyors were allied to the architects in more ways than one, and he trusted the time was not far distant when they would work more closely together. (Applause.)

Mr. R. Howden, President of the Transvaal Institute of Architects, also replied to the toast. He mentioned that at the last meeting of the Committee of the Institute it had been decided to recommend members to adopt the system of measurement. Speaking as to the relationship between the architects and quantity surveyors, he thought this should be decided in the future by a conference between the two. Concluding, he said the order of the day was progress. At one time builders, architects and quantity surveyors were at loggerheads, but to-day they were at one, and when the Union Act was passed he was sure things would go ahead as they should. (Applause.)

Mr. N. Cowin proposed "The Master Builders of South Africa." Speaking of the problems which had to be dealt with by the master builders, he touched on the question of apprentices. Were they, he said, to continue to derive their skilled mechanics from overseas? If so, he was afraid the building trade was relying upon a failing source of supply. The Old Country could not spare men, and Australia was crying out for more labour. He knew there was a difficulty in the disinclination of the South African boy to do manual labour, but this must be overcome, and a step in the right direction was the introduction of carpentry classes in the schools. By the training of apprentices they would do much to reduce labour disturbances. He then approved the attitude of the master builders towards departmental work by public bodies, and touched on the progress which had been made by the building trade.

Employment of Boys.

Mr. J. J. Kirkness, President of the National Federation of Building Trades Employers, acknowledged the toast. Regarding apprentices, he said the master builders wanted to employ them as far as possible. There were various things, however, which militated against this. In the first place builders had no guarantee of continued employment. Then there was the absence of the raw materials used in the building trade. Great headway had to be made before they could fulfil the requirements of the trade in this country, as progress in the way of afforestation was slow. But while the one was not within reach for the present, the other—which would mean at least their partial salvation from within—lay in the making on the spot what was now manufactured in countries which produced the raw material. It would mean a slightly enhanced cost, but they would get a much better article with a longer life, and it would be much cheaper in the end. It would be doing something for the rising generation if they could stimulate a national dependence, and do as much for themselves as possible, paying the little extra amount entailed, and finding employment for the youth of the

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country. Down south to-day there were as many boys who had passed the sixth standard as it would take the S.A.R. to absorb in two years. Surely this called for industries and increasing indentures, and while the Government was deserving of thanks for the educational system it was building up, the cry would be now for more industries to absorb youths upon leaving school. Mr. Kirkness then referred to the tendency of public bodies to undertake departmental work, and pointed out that it was a system which did not encourage the contractor to extend his business so as to be better able to employ the youth of the country. It was difficult to understand on what grounds public bodies administering public funds were justified in adopting the system. Passing on, Mr. Kirkness also urged that agriculture in South Africa should provide a fitting sphere of employment for boys. With professions and trades there should be no alarm for the youth of the Union. (Applause.) He then quoted with approval the advice to found a Technical Institute.

The Chairman then proposed "The President of the South African Institute of Quantity Surveyors." He said:—It is a great pleasure to me that I have been allotted the duty of proposing the toast of the incoming President, Mr. D. A. McCubbin, and to congratulate him on his election. It is a fitting recognition for the work and time he had devoted to the affairs of the Institute. He has been associated with the Institution since its incorporation in 1903, and was then known as the Transvaal Institute of Quantity Surveyors. He was the secretary for many years, and has been a member of the Council continuously since the Institution was constituted. This I think an excellent record, and not only testifies to his public spiritedness but also testifies to the regard he is held in by his fellow members. In view of his long association with the Institute, I am leaving the chair with the greatest confidence that the aims and policy of the Institute are being continued. I am going to take this opportunity to try and explain what the aims and the policy of the Institute are. Firstly, to elevate the status and procure the advancement of the profession. Secondly, to raise the standard of quantities throughout the Union. It does not sound very much, but in reality it is a great deal. Some of my friends of the architectural profession will be surprised at the humbleness of our aims and policy I have just laid down, because it has been stated that the aim of the Institute has been to prevent architects taking out their own quantities. That is not correct; and I wish to be very emphatic on this point. All we ask is that whoever takes out quantities should do so in an orthodox manner, and not issue so-called quantities in which everything which is in any way difficult is left as a guess competition for the contractor tendering; and, moreover, we should be only too pleased to have more members who practice in the dual capacity of architect and quantity surveyor. In proof of this I would point out that our President is also a member of the Council of the Transvaal Architects. Our ideal is the preparation of

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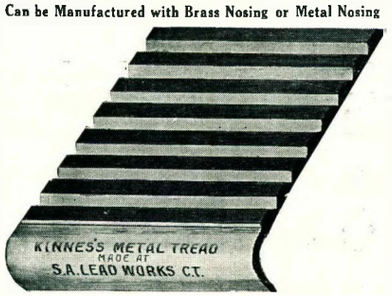
a document in which every item of a monetary value, both in the specification and shown in the drawing, is clearly given, and nothing left to assumption. A bill of quantities should be such that a contractor can price same accurately without reference to either the drawings or specification, and that is the ideal we are striving for. We have gone further, and have prepared the standard system, which has been adopted "in toto" by the Public Works Department of the Union, and this is the document we ask the architectural building world to accept. We understand the difficulty of accepting same as a whole, as it would amount in many cases to a revolution of the existing ideas. I think we shall have made great progress if the various architectural bodies would accept the principles embodied in the system; the matter of details will follow naturally in the process of gradual evolution. In the preliminary remarks to my Council's report for the year I appealed to the members of the Institute to sink their personal views and adopt the units of measurement as laid down in the system for the sake of general uniformity, and I now make a similar appeal to the architectural profession. If one only considers the advantages of uniformity, from a contractor's standpoint, I do not think any single person who takes out quantities can offer a defence. Imagine oneself as a contractor pricing several estimates in the course of a week: one set of quantities give brickwork per cube foot, another per yard super, and I can give dozens of instances of a similar nature, and then imagine the same contractor pricing similar bills taken out with identically the same unit of measurement, and one must then realise the large saving of labour to the various contractors. To the building public, I would remind them that no work can be done without payment, and if the difficulties of the contractors in estimating is increased, someone has to pay, and the one who pays in the long run is the building owner. I would like to give a short history of the standard system and how it came into being. In 1906 a small pamphlet was issued by the Transvaal Association of Quantity Surveyors, entitled "The Standard System of Measurement of Builders' Work and Billing of Quantities." It was the first attempt to standardise, and was of necessity an exceedingly elementary document, and might be classified with a well-known publication called "The Young Surveyor." This pamphlet, I think, served its purpose at the time, but with the gradual development it became inadequate. Some three years

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ago the National Federation of Master Builders asked us to consider the question of producing a more complete work, which we did, and occupied a committee of five members about two years or more of extremely hard work. In view of certain criticisms I should like to state that great care was exercised in the nomination of the committee who compiled the work, which was comprised of men who would have divergent views on the matter to be discussed. An official of the Government was chairman, another member was a surveyor in private practice, and another connected with an architectural firm, another member was a surveyor for a firm of contractors, another member was in practice as an architect. I think, gentlemen, that the personnel of that committee was as representative as possible. Immediately the document was published it was adopted "in toto" by the Public Works Department of the Union, and a circular by them was issued informing all officials that all quantities must be taken out on this system, and no variation would be permitted. It was also adopted by the Quantity Department of the S.A.R. At the same time the Institute passed a special by-law at a general meeting making it compulsory for all members to adopt the system; any variation being an offence against the by-laws. So far so good, but as far as the architectural profession was concerned we have failed up to the present to convince them of the great benefits which would arise by its adoption. As I have before stated, we do not wish to revolutionise the quantities as produced by architects, but I feel certain that if the various architectural bodies would co-operate with us and accept the principles, the standard of measurement will eventually be adopted throughout the Union. Agree to the principles of the standard, and the fuller details will gradually follow. We have been criticised for preparing the system without reference to the architectural bodies, but I should like to point out that the spirit of co-operation had hardly been born, and was in the infantile stage when the work of the standard system was commenced. During the past year or so the spirit of co-operation has been gradually growing, and will reach its adult stage with the consummation of the Union Registration Act for Architects, which has been more or less approved in draft, and which incorporates the surveyors. If the architectural profession will only meet us in the matter of the standard system in the same way as they met us in connection with the Registration Act, the success of the same is assured. Having regard to the Registration Act, I would like to suggest that the idea formulated by Mr. Walter Reid in his letter in the "South African Architect" should receive mature consideration. I have personally advocated the formation of a permanent committee to deal with the Act, and I feel that until such committee is appointed no possible headway will be made. Mr. Reid pointed out that failure to make progress has been due to the lack of continuity of policy, and whilst the matter is left to the changing policy of every newly-elected Council we shall continue to drift. I would suggest that if such committee is ever appointed that we be allowed to be represented. Failing the constitution of such committee, a way out of the difficulty would be that the

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Transvaal Institute, which is the premier voluntary body in the country, numerically and otherwise, should alter their constitution on the lines of the constitution of the Bloemfontein Corporation, which consists of twelve members, half of whom retire every year, viz., those who receive a minority of votes. This plan would at least be a factor in the continuity of the general policy of the Institute, and progress would accordingly follow.

The professions of architect and quantity surveyor are so closely connected, even more than a surgeon and a physician, that no real progress can be made without co-operation between the Institutes representing the two professions, and I am making this appeal with that end, and when we have grievances don't let it be accentuated by that lying jade "Rumour," but let us formulate our grievances and discuss them openly, and merely arrive at a dissolution. Why I mention this is because of a grievance mentioned to me by a certain architect, who received it from another, and as a matter of fact there was not an atom of truth in the first grievance, but it opened my eyes to the manner that unfounded grievances grow when not openly discussed. My policy, and the policy of my successor to the chair, is that of co-operation. Conciliate, or whatever you term it, I feel this policy must, and will, ensure the advancement of the profession.

Mr. Hickman answered to the toast in a humorous speech that was greatly appreciated.

Mr. Francis Black proposed "The Johannesburg Municipality," praising the Council for its efficient administration of the town's affairs.

The Mayor responded, and, touching on the question of departmental work, said a municipality such as Johannesburg must necessarily employ a certain number of mechanics. A certain amount of work must therefore be done departmentally, but the larger works should invariably be thrown open to public tender. He was satisfied that this was to the interests of the town. (Applause.)

The gathering came to an end with the toast of the Chairman and the National Anthem.

Conditions of Contract.

(Officially Communicated.)

Minute of a Conference held in the Board Room of the Johannesburg Master Builders' Association, on Friday the 31st July, at 2.30 o'clock.

There were present:—Mr. J. J. Kirkness, Pretoria, in the chair, Mr. Jas. Prentice, Pretoria; Mr. Jas. Thompson, Johannesburg, Mr. Thos. Clark, Johannesburg, Mr. Jas. T. Brown, General Secretary, representing the National Federation of Building Trade Employers in South Africa; Mr. Walter Reid, Johannesburg, representing the Association of Transvaal Architects; Mr. G. W. Nicolay, Johannesburg, Mr. M. J. Harris, Johannesburg, representing the Society of Architects; Mr. H. G. Veale, Johannesburg, Mr. Robt. Howden, Johannesburg, representing the Transvaal Institute of Architects; Mr. Everard White, Johannesburg, Mr. J. W. Cowling, Pretoria, representing the South African Institute of Quantity Surveyors.

The following were absentees (apologies received):—Mr. Chas. Woods, Johannesburg, National Federation; Mr. D. M. Burton, Johannesburg, Society of Architects; Mr. J. Beardwood, Johannesburg, Association of Transvaal Architects.

The meeting was held in response to the following invitation, which was sent out to each Institute of Architects in South Africa, and also to the Quantity Surveyors' Institute:—

> "Dear Sir,—At the Tenth Annual Congress of the National Federation, which was held recently in Durban, it was agreed that my Federation should take the initiative in calling a joint meeting of representatives of the various Institutes of Architects, Quantity Surveyors and my Federation, for the purpose of discussing the adoption of a uniform set of Conditions of Contract to pertain throughout the whole of the Union. Might I ask, therefore, if you will be so kind as to take whatever steps you think necessary for your representation at this meeting, which will be held within the Board Room of

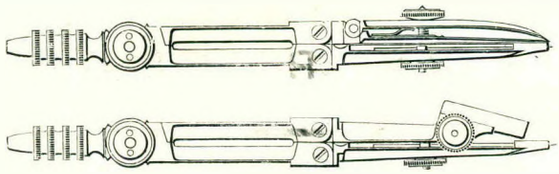
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(Sgd.) JAS. T. BROWN."

The General Secretary of the National Federation announced that no reply had been received from the Cape Institute of Architects, and in response to the invitation the following letter had been received from the Natal Institute of Architects:—

Re Contract Agreement.

'Dear Sir,—I have yours of the 10th re the above, and having placed same before my Council, am instructed to state that: 'The Council of this Institute expresses their surprise at a meeting being called re the above without the Builders first enquiring whether the Architects would be agreeable to attend a meeting for the purpose mentioned. We take it that the meeting is to decide whether or not Conditions of Contract applicable to the whole Union can be arranged.

"This Institute, after several months' work, have only recently completed revising the original Form used by us for the last ten years, but which has, in the light of experience thus gained, required amendments and additions to bring it up to date. The original Form remains substantially as before, the amendments mostly affecting extreme cases only. Should it be decided to hold a series of joint meetings with the object mentioned, we will send for your information the Contract Conditions above alluded to as embodying our views of what Conditions of Contract should be for South Africa, and to suit the conditions as we experience them.—Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) H. E. CHICK,
Hon. Secretary."

A general discussion took place on the letter issued by the National Federation, and thereafter the following resolution was agreed to:—

"This meeting resolves unanimously that improved Conditions of Contract, with a view to their uniform adoption throughout South Africa, are desirable, but because of the letter received from the Natal Institute of Architects, and also because no answer has been received from the Capetown Institute of Architects, further resolves that a further communication be issued, asking for the co-operation and representation of these Institutes, and that the meeting be adjourned pending their reply. Further, that the Presidents of the three Institutes of Architects hereat represented write to the Cape and Natal Institutes, with a view to enlisting their co-operation in the matter."

[This matter is referred to in our Leading Article this issue—"The Two Voices." Ed.]

Association of Transvaal Architects.

Meeting of Council.

(Officially Communicated.)

A meeting of the Council of the above Association was held in the Board Room, Winchester House, Johannesburg, on Wednesday, the 8th of July last, at 5 p.m.

Those present were:—Mr. J. F. Beardwood, President (in the chair), Messrs. E. H. Waugh, W. Lucas, E. M. Powers, R. Howden, H. G. Veale and S. C. Dowsett.

The minutes of the previous Council meeting, held on the 10th of June, were taken as read and confirmed.

The members then proceeded to discuss the case of a local Estate Company, in which certain plans and specifications were alleged to have been prepared and an Architect afterwards called in merely to partially act as supervisor with a view to satisfying the terms of the lease. The matter was considered to be of such importance as to necessitate the Council deciding on circulating the whole of the Association members to the effect that such action is considered as being unprofessional.

Personal.

Mr. Herbert Baker has taken into partnership his pupil, Mr. J. M. Solomon, and the firm will henceforth be known as Messrs. Herbert Baker, Fleming and Solomon.

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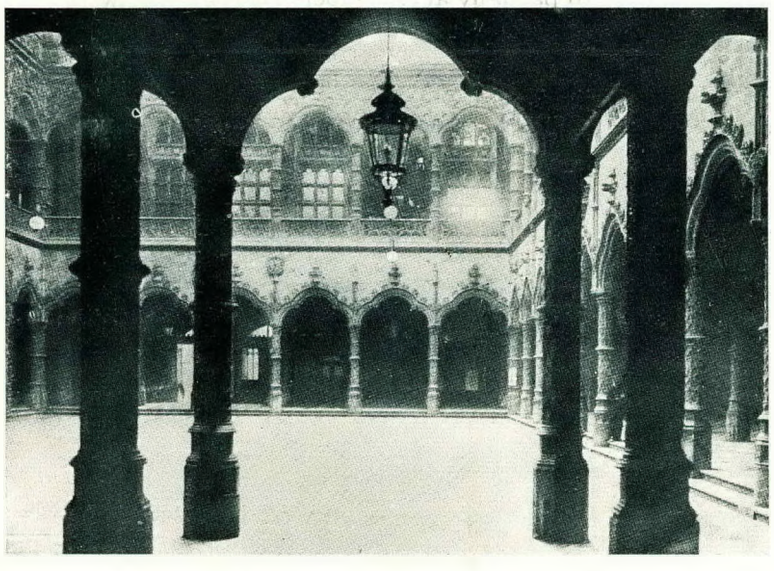
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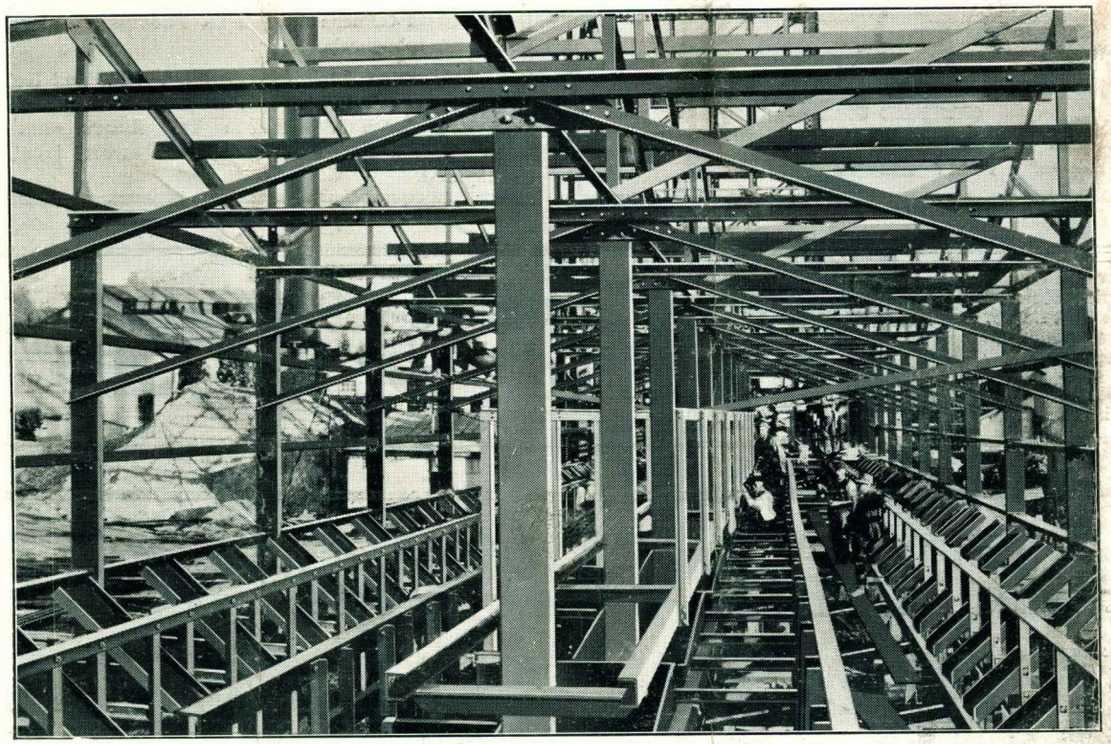
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