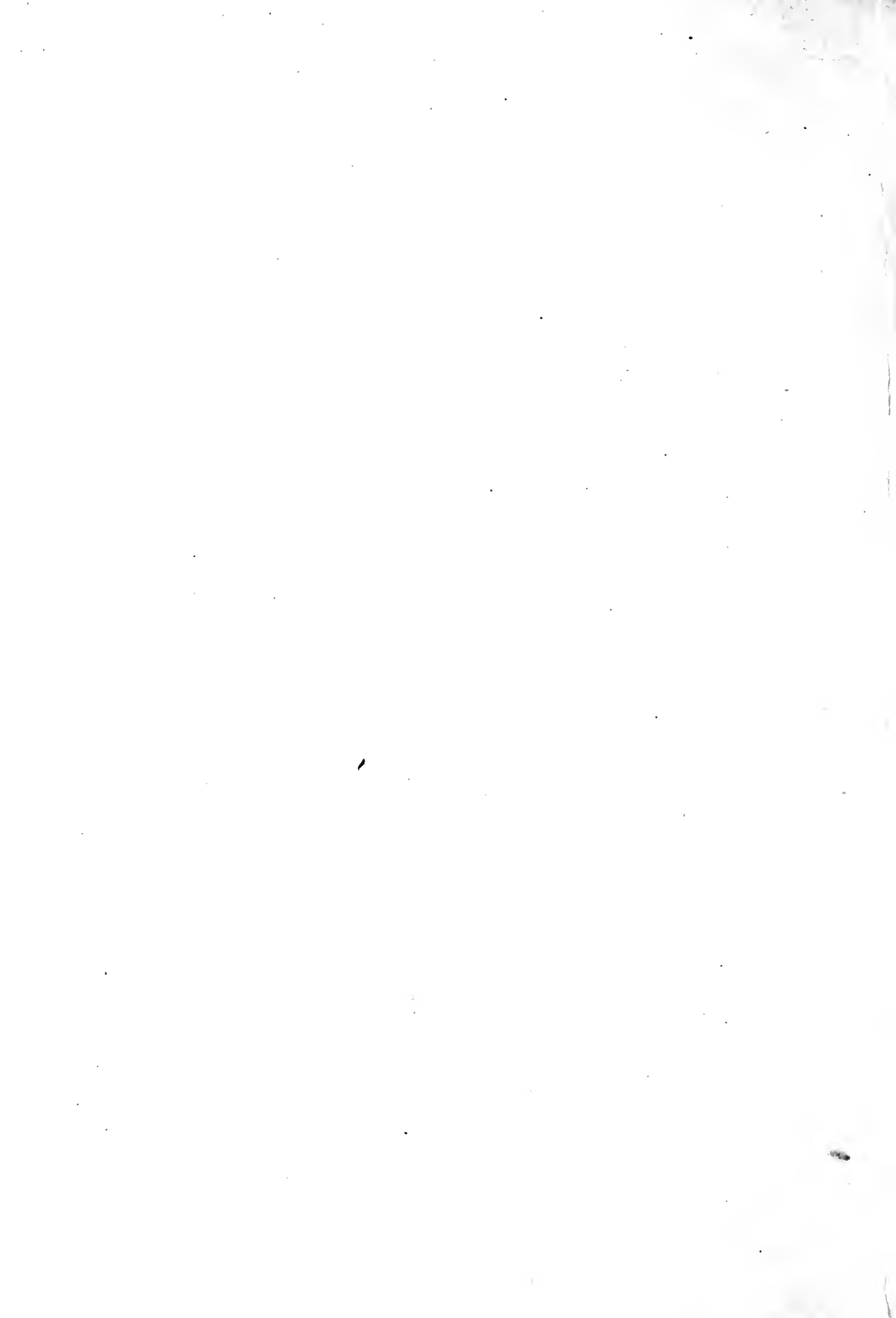


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Ernest Newton, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

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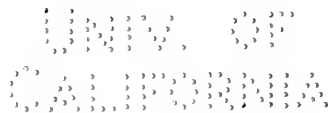
OUR HOMES

AND HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF THEM

BY

WALTER SHAW SPARROW

AUTHOR OF "THE ENGLISH HOUSE," "HINTS ON
HOUSE FURNISHING," ETC.; AND COMPILER OF
"THE BRITISH HOME OF TO-DAY," "THE
MODERN HOME," ETC.



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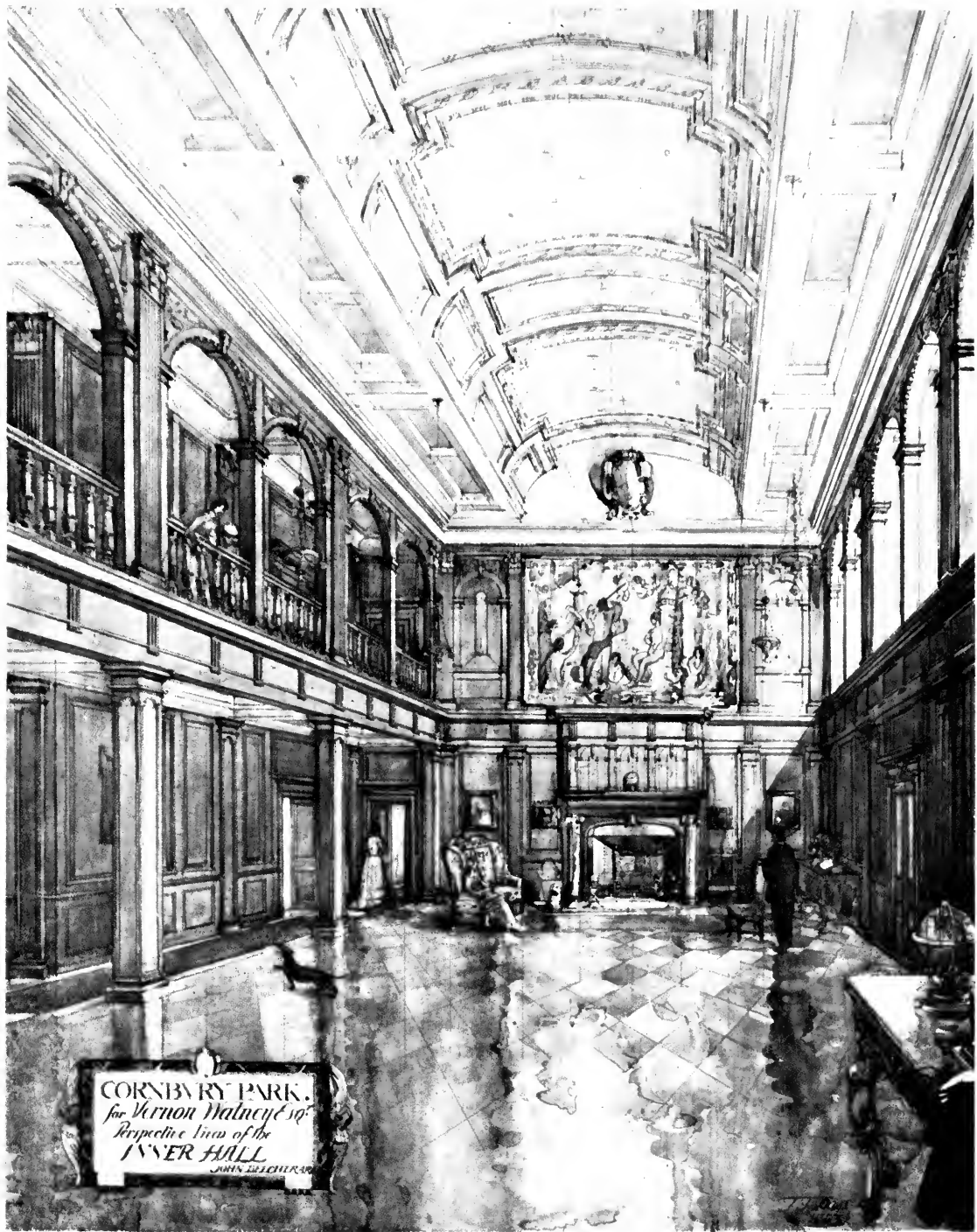
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DONNINGTON HURST, NEAR NEWBURY

FROM A DRAWING BY E. GUY DAWBER

E. Guy Dawber and Whitwell, Architects, London



AT CORNBURY PARK

VIEW OF THE INNER HALL

John Belcher, R.A., Architect, London

INTRODUCTION

PAST AND PRESENT: FROM HALL TO HOUSE

“As a pillar stands firm on the grave of the dead.”—*Homer*.

That is a fine image of stability, though in England a pillar is a cold symbol of commemorated success. It does not appeal to the family heart, being an emblem of public virtue, not a token of domesticity. An English poet would choose a word more intimate than pillar, either “home” or “hall,” but preferably hall, because the English home of to-day grew from that one room. In other words, the hall threw out offshoot chambers and storeys till at last good house-plans were formed, the evolution lasting over a span of so much time that its periods cannot be counted now. “As the hall stands firm on the grave of the dead:” this, then, is a just figure of England’s stability through the ages.

In this matter past and present unite as “true yoke-fellows with Time;” and that is why a book on modern houses should give, as a necessary introduction, a brief account of what they and we owe to bygone generations.

When we get our first glimpses of very primitive halls—rough caves hollowed out by Nature, from which Man has driven the cave lion and the cave bear—we find already some permanent inventions, and among them the arts of sculpture, painting, wall decoration, and engraving, as well as artificial light and heat. One engraving, scratched with a flint needle on a piece of mam-

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moth tusk, first made known the fact that the mammoth had long pendent hair ; and womanhood is represented in the Venus of Brassempouy, carved from a mammoth's tooth by some primitive Pheidias who lived in the middle period of the Stone Age. What art work should *we* do if we were surrounded by bears, lions, sabre-toothed tigers, hyænas, bisons, the mammoth, and the woolly rhinoceros ? What would our pluck be if our weapons of defence were fragments of flint chipped to a point ?

The earliest cave-halls belong to the Mammoth Time, which preceded the Reindeer Period ; but in some of them home life went on and on till the Roman genius built colonies. Clearly, then, cave-dwelling was not disliked by certain types of mankind. Yet as early as the Reindeer Period, when the glacial epoch retreated northward from France and England, Quaternary Man was mentally every whit the equal of present-day man.* Some later skulls of the Stone Age are superior indeed to many modern crania, while the early examples have defective chins, low foreheads that recede, and projecting ridges across the brow.

One would expect to find a corresponding advance in household culture, were it not for two things which have always delayed progress in the home arts. The first is a conservatism that hardens into stereotyped customs ; the second is a dislike for innovations. Mankind has moved forward, not like a single regiment, but in scattered detachments, each one having camp followers, and laggards, so that the line of advance has ever been very uneven and ragged. That is why the cave-hall survived, here and there, till every road went towards Rome.

And the same thing happened with the later phases of home-making, as with pennpits. A pennpit was at first a round hole in the ground from seven to ten feet deep, with a roof of interlaced boughs plastered with clay, and an entrance tunnel not unlike a rabbit-burrow, sloping downwards through solid chalk or earth to the floor. At Fisherton, near Salisbury, as at Cissbury in Sussex, Neolithic pit-halls are carried down through chalk. Now chalk and flint are always found together, so perhaps this

* "The Prehistoric Inhabitants of England." Hunterian Lectures, 1907. By William Wright, M.B., F.R.C.S., F.S.A.

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type of house may have had its rise in flint mines, the warmth of which would soon be noticed by workmen. Warmth means life ; and this fact must have been as apparent to those who lived huddled together in a round pit as it is now to the unhappy down-at-heels who have their homes in dismal cellars or in one-room tenements. These unfortunates, the shreds and patches of humanity, have a lot more pitiable than was that of prehistoric man, because they see around them great riches, and this adds the pain of futile envy to their abiding wretchedness. How to lift up these present-day rivals of primitive man is the most urgent problem which the social arts have to solve. What they need is the heroic self-help which prehistoric man displayed. It is not by charity that our millions of down-at-heels will be rescued, for charity enfeebles pluck and degrades the fallen. Give them emulation, rouse their ambition, by showing the heroism of men in England when a great ice cap stretched from the Thames northward, rising to a height of 2,000 feet in Yorkshire, and when the only weapons in a constant war against terrible wild animals were pieces of chipped flint. Is not that a lesson of courage to be impressed on our submerged tenth ?

From Neolithic pit-dwellings to modern cellar-tenements : this, then, is one journey for students of the home. But it is not the only one. Several other trips, starting from those underground halls, pass through the ages to our own times. The shape of the earliest penpits, for example, has lasting interest. It was round like the burrows of earth-going animals, or like the shafts of modern coal-pits, or like a child's sand-castles and sand-holes. You see, curved lines—segments of a circle—are made instinctively by our gestures and movements. It is difficult to walk straight ahead, because our steps make an arching line, as when we walk without premeditation over a snowy plain. Straight walking is the result of effort, like the drawing of straight lines ; and it is Dame Nature herself that speaks to us in these things. For Nature builds in the round. Angular things in her domain mean disturbance, either past or present ; past, as in broken rocks cast up by prehistoric earthquakes ; and present disturbance, as in zigzag flashes of lightning. On the other

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hand, everything that promises continued light and life and intelligence and movement—everything hopeful and reproductive—is round or rounded. The moon grows from a crescent to a circle, when she rivals by night the sun's unchanging form by day. The first wheel was a section of a tree-trunk, and the unknown man who invented the wheel invented modern progress also. Flowers, eggs, fruits, vegetables, leaves, give us in various ways this principle of life in forms which are round, or oval, or arched; and we know that the progress of primitive man is shown most clearly in a rounding growth of the skull, which gave him an oval or a domed forehead. As to his round architecture, his circular pits and huts, they date from a time when his cranial development was complete, except for such individual variation as occurs even to-day, for no two things in nature's work are ever precisely alike.

And I dwell upon these matters here because the round form in house architecture, dating from Neolithic times, is a thing of very great importance to ourselves, since Mankind has been astonishingly loyal to it, not merely in round towers and wheel-windows, in spires and domes, but in those oval and circular halls which were built in England during the eighteenth century, as in France to-day. And to these shapes, moreover, modern science asks us to return, because angular corners collect dust and microbes, while curved surfaces are much easier to keep clean.

Again, our architecture since about the seventh century has used or developed the round-headed arch borrowed from the Romans. What would our Gothic styles be without their vaults and their arched doorways and windows? And remember the round arch which the Renaissance brought back to England from Italy.

Still, the charm and utility of curved shapes are not the only things which have survived through all the ages from the earliest pit-halls. For man's burrowing instinct is as active now as it ever was among the Neolithic folk, and from the first it was anti-simian, as much opposed to the Ape's tree-climbing as are the habits of foxes to those of squirrels. Learned men suppose that the earliest transitional types between the Ape and Man lived in

PAST AND PRESENT : FROM HALL TO HOUSE

trees as the New Guinea natives live now. But when Neolithic families ran to earth for warmth and safety they broke away from that arboreal nimbleness which was in itself a ready means of keeping aloof from dangers. They ought really to have kept the most useful aptitude of their kinsfolk, the apes ! And don't you wonder why it should be easier to train a good collier, brimful of "pit pride," than a good sailor, glad to be in the rigging ? The pennpit in human history is a hard nut to be cracked. It turns up very often in English architecture. From the first half of Henry the Third's reign, for example, underground shops were dug out in front of town houses ; and although their stairs encroached on the little space in very narrow streets, they were yet so popular that some were built in Sheffield as late as Elizabeth's reign. They were the pennpits of mediæval trade.

In England to-day, and in Ireland also, many old cottages are two or three steps underground, just as many round huts were in Italy five centuries before the birth of Christ, according to Helbig ; and this reminds us not only that pennpits became shallower, their evolution being up towards the sun's light, but that the floor was kept a foot or two below the surface, for warmth. And this practice was continued in rectangular homes.

In the time of Tacitus, the first century A.D., some Germans lived subterraneously, with great heaps of dung piled above the roofs of their pennpits ; in winter they were warm, and they felt safe from enemies ; so perhaps they grumbled less than do the many servants of to-day who toil below ground in dim, unhealthy basements. According to Professor Sullivan, some later pennpits had two storeys, the lower one being a store-room for food ; and women especially worked in the upper floor, weaving fabrics for clothes. In Ireland, too, as in Italy, several pennpits were joined together by narrow passages along which the inmates crept on their stomachs, feeling perhaps as happy as we do when we rush by a tube railway from station to station.

Here we pick up two more permanent traditions—connecting passages and connected storeys. Again, some prehistoric men evolved a long shape with squared corners, the very shape to which we owe the oblong Saxon hall. Professor Sullivan says :—

OUR HOMES

“Every *Dun* and *Rath* had small chambers excavated under the *Airlis* or ground within the enclosing mound or rampart. These chambers vary in size, but are usually nine or ten feet long, three or four broad, and three or four feet high.”

England, too, has primitive oblong shapes in the long funeral barrows, some of which Dr. Wright considers almost certainly of Neolithic date. A few are chambered ; that is to say, they contain a number of stone cists which open into a gallery or passage way, with an entrance uncovered by earth and having two jambs and a very large capstone or lintel. These chambered barrows, it is thought, may have been built after the pattern of one form of dwelling. They are not unlike the beehive-huts of Ireland, which were inhabited. A statement in “*Minos*,” attributed by some to Plato, and quoted by Dr. Wright, says that “the Iberians once buried their dead in their houses.” *The corse was carried to its lang hame*, as they say in Scotland.

However, there were two kinds of funeral mounds, the long and the round, and these shapes were seen in huts when the Romans came to Britain. Even to-day we have in England a type of hut as primitive as any that prehistoric man lived in ? It is the charcoal burner’s hut, a simple round hall with coned sides made of sticks and covered with turves, and therefore much less architectural than a round hut with upright walls and a spanning roof.

So, little by little, we recover from the past the beginnings of many forms and traditions which are still useful to us. Venice, like the art of bridge building, was heralded by the first lake-homes or halls. These, in Switzerland, show at its highest the Neolithic culture. In England, on the other hand, no lake-dwelling appears to be older than the Bronze Age. But even when the Romans came to England and settled down, some colonies mainly of round huts were still built on platforms over marshes, as near Glastonbury, where research has discovered houses of three kinds : circular, oval, and right-angular.

Well now. Why was the round form given up little by little ? Experts offer several replies, but I do not find one that is quite satisfactory. Mr. S. O. Addy says that rectangular huts were

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not evolved from the round house, but from the booth or tent that shepherds set up on two wooden forks during the summer, stretching a ridge-tree from prong to prong, and covering the framework with whatever material was suitable for immediate use. It is true that such booths at our early date were the homes of shepherds on summer pasture lands, but there is nothing to show that in them we find the *first* step of transition from circular to rectangular halls. That step may belong to the first long barrow built with chambers. Further, it seems to me best to look at this matter in its relation (a) to roofing difficulties, and (b) to the pride of chieftains, for in round huts of a small size no chief could hold a primitive court and keep at a distance from his dependents. This practical drawback would be keenly disliked and efforts would be made to enlarge the diameter, with the result that an increasing span of roof would soon overtax the primitive building methods. In Italy, for example, according to Helbig, the diameter of round huts varied from three to four metres, but never exceeded six. Here, then, we get the limit of the circle which could be roofed by primitive workmen. Yet a hall six metres in diameter would be a poor court for a proud chieftain, who would need some such oblong form as the Saxons found convenient, because a chief could have one end for his high table and mark his distinction by a platform or dais. For these reasons I looked upon round huts as belonging to what may be called a Pre-Royal Period when family life was not much disturbed by the ambitions of great leaders with courtiers.

Round huts gradually assumed an oval shape. As soon as the roofing troubles became very difficult and tiresome, an attempt would be made to lessen one diameter; the sides would be flattened, making a rough oval form, and from that form to an oblong would be a simple transition. At Glastonbury, for instance, the marshfolk at last used great hurdles for the side walls. Three have been discovered among the *débris* underlying the clay of a dwelling mound. One hurdle measures 6 ft. 3 in. high by 10 ft. 6 in. long, with an average space of five inches between the upright posts; and the framework of hurdles was wattled and daubed with clay, a method of wall-building from

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which was evolved the beautiful post-and-pan houses of our countryside.

We now see clearly our indebtedness to prehistoric times. It includes painting, engraving, wall decoration, sculpture, and pottery; the round shapes from which arches and domes were evolved; timber-framed buildings plastered with mud-clay; the first elements of roof-construction; that tradition of a central hearth which lasted in halls for so many historic centuries; the first rectangular homes; and last, but not least, the underground homing-instinct of man. The present is the past renewed and re-made. The Neolithic inhabitants of England probably spoke the Gaelic language, and are probably to be identified with the short, dark, oval-headed people with small features who are to be found to-day in Cornwall, Wales, Isle of Man, Ireland, and the West of Scotland as far north as the Orkneys. (See Dr. William Wright, Lecture II. (b), p. 21.)

Our next step is to follow the right-angular hall in its slow evolution till it becomes a modern cottage, usually jerry-built, and a modern country-house, often admirably thorough. Let the cottage be taken first.

Mr. S. O. Addy describes the ancient building methods. Cottages were put up on gavel-forks and in bays, and a bay measured sixteen feet, like the rod or perch for measuring land. A hall of one bay was the simplest kind of cottage. "Two pairs of bent trees, in form resembling the lancet-shaped arches of a Gothic church, were set up on the ground, and united at their apexes by a ridge-tree. The framework so set up was strengthened by two tie-beams and four wind-braces, and was fastened together by wooden pegs. . . . The oldest of these buildings had no upper storey, and the walls were made of wattle-work plastered over with clay or mud. Sometimes they were covered by planks resting on the crucks (*i.e.*, the gavel-forks, the bent trees) and laid parallel to the ridge. . . . The door of these buildings was in one of the gable ends." (S. O. Addy, pp. 17-18.)

In the thirteenth century, according to Thorold Rogers, the inhabitants of a manor had their homes generally on the principal street or road of the village, and near the stream, if one ran

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through the settlement. The protecting manor house was usually near the church ; and peasants from their doorways could hear the mill-wheel, which bickered with as much noise as women made when the miller used a false measure or asked too much toll.

The better class of yeoman had timber houses built on gavel-forks and a frame, the spaces being either lathed and plastered inside and outside, or filled with mud and clay mixed with chopped straw. A floor of beaten earth was littered with dirty reeds or grasses, where pecks of fleas hid themselves, for they disliked the carbon smoke rising from a wood fire on a central hob of clay. Chimneys were unknown, except in manor houses and in castles, so the smoke got away through whatever aperture it could reach. A chest or two stood by the walls, where spades and other implements hung from pegs, with some bunches of herb simples, probably ; and from the ceiling timbers a bacon rack dangled. Above, under a thatched roof, was a loft, a horrid place, where fatigue somehow managed to sleep comfortably, though rats squeaked in the thatch, and other vermin were nipping and eager, like Shakespeare's winter air. But I do not think that wives then were sweet-tempered ; and hence the ducking-stool and its watery discipline.

As to peasant cottagers, their home was usually built of posts wattled and daubed ; now and then, there may have been a second storey reached by a ladder, though upper rooms were not common in cottages of the next generations. Some coarse bedding, a few domestic implements, mostly earthenware, a pot or two of copper or brass, and some iron utensils—these are the main articles of furniture which Rogers gleaned from the taxing rolls of Edward I.

A century later, or thereabouts, Chaucer drew a sketch of simple rustic life, in the *Nonnes Preestes Tale*, where we meet with a poor widow and her two daughters, living beside a grove in a narrow cottage, with a dale around them. Her rent is small, her cattle are few ; and she waits for the husbandry that God sends. There are three large sows, one sheep, and three kine. Though poor she can feel proud, for her home has two

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chambers, a hall and a bower, evidently separated by an open doorway ; both are "ful sooty," and this humble family cannot afford two fires, we may think. Chaucer sees many advantages in the widow's lot, He does not condole with her because her diet is "accordant to her cote," giving her many a slender meal of white and black, milk and brown bread, in which she finds no lack ; she spreads them on the board in her hall, with sometimes an egg or two, but never a drop of wine, either white or red. So repletion never makes her sick, the gout troubles her not, and apoplexy she need not fear. Evidently Chaucer knows the effects of two splendid meals a day among the rich, a long dinner at ten or eleven o'clock in the morning, and a thirsty supper at five.

The cottage has a yard, enclosed all around with sticks, and a dry ditch lies beyond.

At a first glance these early rustic scenes appear rude because we have in mind the beautiful cottage homes of later times, now surviving in country-places like old pastoral poetry—ballads of stone or of timber and plaster. Yet, rightly considered, they are not rude for their period and social conditions ; indeed, they mark a very great advance on preceding cottage halls, when there was only one room, and when a family slept all together on rough pallets of grass laid on benches or on the dirt-sodden floor. A bower on a level with the hall, or an upper storey on poles, reached by a ladder, was the first suggestion that the poor borrowed from the manor lord, and subsequent improvement was nothing more than a perfecting of those two additions to the primitive houseplace or hall.

For instance, a yeoman's house in the great sixteenth century was just a continuation of the mediæval plan : it had in the centre an oblong hall or common room, with offices or other rooms at either end, forming wings. Sometimes a wing was built at one end only, but more often the planning was symmetrical. This type of plan was usual in all parts of England, and to it we probably owe the origin of the E and H-shaped houses which, on a much larger scale, developed in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. Even to-day, after the destroying vandalism of the

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last hundred years, many old cottage homes have this plan, or some modification of it, as in Kent and Sussex. The earliest form a parallelogram, with ends slightly thrust forward; the upper storey at the floor level projected; and sometimes the projection was carried around the whole building. Mr. Guy Dawber is an excellent authority on these points.

As time went on the word "hall" was dropped by cottage folk; it was changed for "kitchen," which to this day is the real dwelling-room of an English workman: a point forgotten by Mr. John Burns when he girds at "the front parlour." This latter room may be used on great occasions, as for the reception of guests to a funeral; but its usual office in home life is to be prized rather than employed: and the feeling of pride which seals it up as a kind of treasure is to be found among villa folk in our suburbs as well as among rural cottagers and town workmen. Mr. Burns has a right to protest, because a parlour unused not only robs a house of breathing space and cramps the whole plan; it does harm to health and character, for who can think and move freely in diminutive rooms? Still, while protesting, Mr. Burns should remember *why* the front parlour is a loved inutility—a thing too good to be used. It denotes among the poor the last stage of evolution from one room to several or many; and as to the household life in kitchens, it is a survival of the ancient common life in a single room, a hall. What may be named *the instinct of the hall* is thus strongly alive to-day among the masses; and by appealing to it much progress may be made in house architecture.

In other words, we need simpler planning, so as to get fewer rooms of a larger size. We put up far too many walls, with the result that most of them are ill-built and as communicative as telephones. No one would try to plant an oak tree in a flower-pot. Yet in thousands of villas a silly attempt is made to give in bandbox rooms the accommodation of a large mansion. And cottages wish to be villas. There is thus a want of common sense in the planning of simple homes. Well now. When a small dwelling has one big generous room, common to a whole family for day use, instead of three diminutive reception rooms,

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so called, we get a hall of the old type, airy and spacious, dignified, charming ; it enlarges and refreshes the atmosphere and *morale* of households.

A good hall in a small home is far and away better than a drawing-room, both for dancing and for other amusements. Its oak floor can be left exposed, with loose rugs spread here and there ; and instead of the fragile furniture which now fill up our wee day-rooms, we need nothing more than a few oak benches and tables and chairs, with writing-desks in two bonnie bay-windows. Such a hall may be two storeys high, and have a gallery around it for access to the upper rooms, so there is abundant scope for architectural effect.

Halls of the old type have the romance which belongs to all historic traditions, and romance at the present time is often connected with unuseful ideals. The public says, indeed : " Old halls, d'you say ? Why trudge back to the past instead of going ahead, improving the present ? " As well might they ask : " Why keep the old beauty of our English tongue ? Let us have with each decade a new language of vivid and picturesque slang ! "

This does not mean that the merits of other times can be *copied* into reproductive life. Copying is ever a sterile energy. But the traditions of architecture and of the household arts form a language ready made, invaluable as the mother tongue we speak, for in it original talents can express themselves with all necessary freedom and distinction. It is a language to be learnt till we know its inner essence and its life.

" As in olde felde, corne fresh and greene grewe,

So of olde bookes commeth our conning newe ; "

and the conning, or knowledge, of to-day springs from the seed sown by our forefathers. From the past we get standards by which to judge ourselves. Take, for instance, this present question of cottages and small houses, and ask yourself in what ways the present is far inferior to bygone times. The answer to this question is concerned with such contrasts of good with defective workmanship as may be found in any village where old houses stand like strongholds of ancient hopes in the midst of a jerried waste of our own building material. Few homes are

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now in accord with social conditions which should govern them ; and this being so, what social conditions receive least attention ? They are these :

1. A growing cost of production, and therefore an urgent need to simplify *all* workmanship, so that money may be spent on essentials and not on unnecessary walls, superfluous bandbox rooms, and meretricious ornamentation.

2. A greater cost for household expenses, owing to higher rents and to train fares and 'bus fares, and to dearer wages for service.

3. More labour and less pay for those of us who are not considered working-men, because our day's toil is twelve hours or so of brain-effort.

4. A decreasing birth-rate, particularly among those that know the penalties of trying to succeed to-day without capital. Too much competition forbids the young to venture, to take risks.

These conditions have been ignored by builders ; and even architects have not given them enough thought. Yet they all point to the same necessary thing—simpler planning, so that money may be saved without harm to either comfort or craftsmanship. Small rooms not only lessen the health value of a home ; they are as troublesome to keep clean as an equal number of large rooms. A good hall is not only healthier than three tiny reception-rooms ; it is much easier to dust and wash. Moreover, we cannot expect much help from architects in so far as cottages and little houses are concerned, because no architect can earn a living out of designs and work for such humble dwellings ; and so we are dependent mainly on jerry-builders. Our only hope is this : that Parliament may yet look upon all house architecture as a public and national affair, to be safeguarded in a public manner by efficient referees appointed by district councils and approved by the Board of Trade. We owe much to the new legislation introduced with care and foresight by Mr. John Burns.

We have now to consider the large type of house that goes back in direct descent to vast Saxon halls and to Roman villas. The influence of the Roman house-plan lasted for many centuries,

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as in Cornwall. In that county, according to Richard Carew, who wrote in 1602, houses had a low site and were built of stones with mortar of lime and sand ; their walls were thick, and their little arched windows peered from interior walls into a court, as in Roman houses. This arrangement, borrowed by the Romans from Eastern folk, was adopted also by mediæval monasteries ; and when the great central area or quadrangle had around it a covered walk or cloister, it had another thing in common with big Roman villas, as at Chedworth and Lydney, where a peristylum surrounded the court or atrium and screened the rooms behind it. Principal windows looked inwardly upon the quadrangle, as in hot climates. Stern monks adopted this Roman idea because it hid their life from a naughty and delightful world, and yet gave them something more than a feeling of superior virtue well-guarded, for was there not plenty of air and freshness in a large court hidden and cloistered ? Manor lords often used the same plan because windows facing a court were less dangerous than those in outside walls, through which arrows and other missiles could enter quite as readily as sunshine and daylight.

Yet it is said that Romanesque houses were at odds with the English climate : as if architects were ruled by climate only during times of social violence ! The quadrangle was useful as an interior defence, for sheep and cattle were driven there when dangers threatened ; and there was space enough for those huge barns that historians love to mention, barns ranging in length from about 112 ft. to more than 300 ft. Many had a nave flanked by aisles, and resembled a basilica of timber and stone copied by Englishmen from a Roman original. Surviving barns of this type could be made into excellent prison-schools for our jerry-builders !

The Roman atrium, kept in English architecture as an uncovered area, was used for some mediæval hospitals as well as for monasteries and manor houses ; as in the great Leper Hospital at Sherburn, founded by Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, who died in 1194, and who ordered that goose with apple sauce should be given to patients on Michaelmas Day ! Illustrated Saxon MSS. prove that the round-headed Roman arch was copied for

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Anglo-Saxon doorways and for those porched entrances to great Common Halls where visitors laid aside their weapons. Some MSS. of Saxon date appear to show brick walls, and Roman buildings were for ages treated as quarries, as in the tenth and eleventh centuries when the church and abbey of St. Alban's were built with materials from Verulamium.

It is believed that Roman houses, like prehistoric huts, were without chimneys ; and it is certain that Rome had no chimneys as late as the fourteenth century, though some existed then at Padua and Placentia. The fire burned under the dome on a central hearth or reredos, and it was used for cooking. This custom belonged also to Anglo-Saxon ways of living ;* and the central fire with a louvre in the roof above it was retained in English halls generation after generation, the last one disappearing in 1850, from the hall in Westminster School. I do not know why the ancient Roman method of heating a house was not copied by Saxon and Norman architects. A hypocaust—namely, a furnace connected with a series of small chambers and flues of tiles or other masonry through which heat from a fire was distributed—formed a good contrivance, first used in baths, and afterwards employed for rooms ; and yet it vanished from English history during the Middle Ages, as did baths for a long time. Christianity has never been friendly enough to the virtue of personal cleanliness. Baths are mentioned sometimes in the reign of Henry the Third ; but not so often as in records of the fourteenth century. It appears that they were used most often as restoratives after great fatigue, as when Knights were tired out by exercise in heavy armour. Our own personal cleanliness cannot be looked upon as Anglo-Saxon : it is rather a happy return to a Roman ideal. Filth was a characteristic of mediæval homes. For instance, there was an open gutter at Westminster in the Royal Hall ; it made the courtiers ill ; and yet this foul nuisance continued until Henry III. built a passage underground into the Thames.

* English chimneys in later times were often built of wood plastered with mud-clay, forming sometimes a raised flue on the surface of walls, and sometimes a hood and funnel to conduct smoke from a central fire to the louvre.

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However, now that we have seen what Roman traditions did or did not influence the English house in its evolution from primitive forms, we must see how Saxon halls were arranged ; and here we are greatly helped by the poem of Beowulf, which gives a type of hall probably more splendid than that of Edward the Confessor, though dating from a much earlier time. Poets have a right to make truth decorative and winsome. Beowulf, it will be remembered, with his companions, pass from the sea coast along a paved road to the royal hall of Hrothgar and his queen Wealtheaw, who are visited by a monster named Grendel, that comes at night to prey upon their dependents ; and the mission of Beowulf is to slay Grendel and Grendel's mother. The main points to be remembered are the following :

1. Hrothgar's palace has a hall-gate, which rises aloft, high and curved with pinnacles.

2. The hall itself is high, and "fast within and without, having iron bands forged in a skilful manner." This, I believe, is the earliest mention of hingestraps in ornamental ironwork ; they gave charm and security to English doors and chests for many centuries ; and architects would gladly revive them because the way in which a door is hinged securely to its jamb ought not to be hidden from sight, but made evident and decorative.

3. There seem to be steps upward into a porch.

4. The roof, high-pitched and carved, is "variegated with gold." This means, probably, that a roof of elaborate wooden shingles has a little gilding here and there. Saxon builders were fond of wooden shingles, and so were the Romans. Thatching with reeds, straw, heather or turf, comes to us also from Saxon times ; and at an early date thatches were whitewashed as a protection against fire. But a roof of timber shingles was more distinguished, though it does not seem to have been quite satisfactory, for leaden roofs were put on some important buildings at least as early as the seventh century. Norman architects were particularly fond of lead ; but shingles and thatches still held their own in popular work ; it was not till the fourteenth century that slates and tiles came widely into vogue for good houses. And the roof of Hrothgar's hall has another point of

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interest. It is lofty, so that roofs with a high pitch are of Saxon origin, though often looked upon as of later date.

5. Inside the hall there are several noteworthy things : a chair or throne of state, for example, and a "variegated floor," perhaps a tessellated pavement taken from a Roman villa, for paving tiles were rare in England at a much later date as between the thirteenth century and the fifteenth. Mediæval carpets were generally rushes and green leaves and grass ; the art of floor decoration was neglected, though Henry III. encouraged its development. As late as the fourteenth century, when carpets crept slowly into fashion, and when large fortunes were spent on tapestries, many ladies had their rooms sprinkled with leaves and grass and flowers. So that we are fortunate to find in Hrothgar's hall a decorative pavement of some kind or other.

6. And the poem surprises us in another way. The walls are draped with tapestries, on which "many a wondrous sight" is worked, and there are stitches of gold thread that glint sparklingly. This work of the Saxon ladies has great interest because tapestry was little used in England until the famous Arras webs were introduced during the Edwardian epoch. Prior to that time, as in Henry III.'s great household reign, the tradition of English wall decoration was a good coloured wainscot with a painted frieze above it ; and this good fashion has been revived now and then in recent years, as by Mr. Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A.

7. The household manners are vividly described. The poet speaks of long feasting with a constant flow of wine and ale, and a gleeman sings, and stories of brave deeds are told, and Queen Wealtheaw hands a twisted ale-cup to her husband and to her guests, till at last it is time to go to bed. Beowulf and his attendants remain in the hall, the sleeping-place for men, while the King and Queen retire to their bowers, and sleep so heavily after their wine that they do not hear the great noise that accompanies the killing of Grendel, though it is loud enough to strike terror into the watchmen on the walls. Sleeping in the hall is noted picturesquely. "They bared the bench-planks ; these were spread all over with beds and bolsters ; at their heads they

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set their war-rims, the bright shield-wood ; there on the bench might easily be seen, above the warrior, his helmet lofty in war, the ringed mail-shirt, and the solid shield ; for it was their custom ever to be ready for battle, both in house and in field."

This custom had a long reign in England ; and that it was not friendly to good conduct is proved both by satirical writers and by the squint window through which my lord from his bower could keep an eye of discipline on his retainers. The mediæval hall was often called the "men's house," and the bower "the women's house," so that they corresponded to the Greek *andronitis* and *gynaeconitis*.

From the Venedotian code we learn that a Saxon theyne built his hall from the woods on his demesne, and that his bondmen had to erect nine buildings ; the hall, a bower, a battery, a barn, a dog-house, a kiln for bread, a privy, and a stable. These buildings were all of one storey, and sometimes they were connected by covered ways. Cooking was done by the hall fire in winter and out of doors during the summer. A wall surrounded the whole settlement. Finally, if a Saxon homestead of to-day may be taken as evidence, there were in England types of hall in which horses and cattle were housed in the aisles, and where yokels slept in a loft above the horses, and women servants in another loft over the cows.

There is just one more Saxon tradition to be remembered ; it is the decoration of exterior walls, of which there are examples in Saxon MSS. There can be no doubt that walls at a later date were decorated outside, as in the case of the Rose Tower at Windsor Castle, which Edward III. had painted with varnish and colours to represent the flower after which the tower was named. This was bad art, of course, but it proves that polychrome effects of colour on external walls belong to the English traditions ; and this fact has enthusiastic advocates to-day, notably Mr. Ricardo.

The main effect of the Norman conquest was to intensify the Roman influence, for the round-headed arch was employed with great skill, and more attention was given to stone houses. In the twelfth century, for example, good manor houses gathered

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together into a rude plan all the traditions of household comfort which the past had formed tentatively. Around a central area of a large size big buildings were carefully grouped ; an ox-house perhaps thirty-three feet long and twelve wide ; a sheep-cote rather longer, and a lamb-cote also ; a great barn, a kitchen, and a stable, and a bakehouse, and some store places for grain. At Kensworth Manor House, Hertfordshire, very well described by Mr. Addy, there was a vast hall 35 ft. long, 30 ft. broad, and 22 ft. high ; next to it the *domus* or house, a chamber 17 ft. long and 12 ft. broad, and from it a door led into the *thalamus* or bower, the women's apartment, measuring 22 ft. long and 16 broad.

It was a rude plan, but being as simple as the family life of mediæval England, it became a settled tradition, and was handed on to some big homesteads of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But, of course, every type of plan admits of many variations, and ancient manor houses were no exceptions to this rule. Sometimes the ground floor had a buttery and the great hall, with a passage way between them and a screen of wood on each side of the passage ; above, in a second storey, were the bower and the chapel, with an outside staircase on the court side of the house. The screen was always an important feature in a hall ; it was put up at the entrance end, so that it faced the dais, and from it doors led into the kitchen and offices.

We have now reached a definite house-plan, easy to develop as new wants grow urgent. From Henry the Third's time, for example, and thence through the Edwardian period, we watch the growth of refinement in such details as the building of privy chambers and enlarged wardrobes, and also of little offshoot cabinets from bed-sitting rooms, akin to the toilette closets in modern French hotels. There was delicacy in the thought that first introduced these conveniences, for married life becomes vulgar when wash-stands are not hidden away from view. A great many double bed-rooms at the present time have no refinement at all in this important respect. They imply that marital happiness needs no glamour and secretive shyness.

Henry III. was the first great home-maker in England, and

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the following facts join his improvements to the art of homeliness in those great houses which were built between the reigns of Henry VII. and James I.

Ways of Communication. The entrance to manor houses was as a rule by an external staircase carried on the wall and protected from the weather by an overhanging roof ; the steps often ended in a wooden porch built before the main entrance. When a house had two storeys the exterior staircase ran up the wall to the second floor. A newel stair was built at West-Deane rectory, and Henry III. made a spiral stair between his chamber and the chapel at Clarendon, as he hated to creep his way through a falling trap door (*trapa descendens*). At Rochester Castle, on the other hand, courtiers had to pass through His Majesty's room to chapel, going up to it by an internal staircase, so the King built for them an outer stair and got privacy for himself. During the fourteenth century, whenever a hall was on the upper storey, as happened frequently, an outdoor flight of steps ran up to it from the courtyard. The smaller staircases were generally internal, either newel stairs in turrets, or a straight flight from the lower end of a hall to the minstrels' gallery and the room behind it. Stairs, too, often led from the dais end of a hall to rooms above. Those in turrets, winding around a newel, were often wide and comfortable, as at Langley Castle, Northumberland ; and during the fifteenth century, though external stairs were often built, many improvements were made. No longer do we read of primitive ladders to connect a hall with the solars, or upper rooms. And truly domestic staircases are mentioned, flanked with carved banisters of oak ; they were tentative forerunners of those noble stairs belonging to Elizabeth's time and the Renaissance. Finally, what about our own modern art of staircase design ? Does it not cut a poor figure in ordinary houses ? A staircase to-day has very often a look of shabby gentility, like a retired grocer in a Welsh village.

Between the XIII. century and the XV., passages and corridors came into vogue ; at first they were made in the thickness of walls, and got their light sometimes through loopholes only, but as often through little windows. Now and then, particularly

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in timber houses, they were external arrangements, and formed a double cloister, one over the other, as in the beautiful Prior's House at Wenlock in Shropshire, which all students of the home ought to study carefully. The double Cloister never went all around the court or quadrangle, but was put on one side only; and this pretty custom, followed for a long time, survived the Renaissance period, and gave charm to some country inns of our Victorian era. It will be remembered that mediæval corridors culminated in those Elizabethan long galleries on the upper floor that often extended the whole length of a house, serving as a communication between the wings, the hall being often two storeys high. Old English homes have no feature more charmingly dignified than these long galleries are, with their oak panelling and their modelled plaster ceilings, their noble windows, and their spacious beauty. The largest of all was built at Montacute : it is 16 ft. high, 170 ft. long, and 18 ft. wide. A vast apartment, it gives us a good hint for a modern picture gallery.

General Progress. Henry III. took infinite pains to fortify his manor houses and to make them beautiful and comfortable, proving thereby that this type of home was recognised by him as the best; and his courtiers and nobles, following the King's examples, forsook donjon-keeps and built within their baileys big halls and chambers like those in manor houses. The dais end of halls became the point from which the house-plan spread out into wings for family use; while the entrance end, with a minstrels' gallery above the screens, developed more and more into a wing for service work and accommodation. The fifteenth century shows very clearly the results of this growth. It was a century of great social changes. Retainers in great households began to lose their old position as soldiers and men-at-arms; many became yeomen and peasants, while others preferred to live as domestic servants. This had a marked effect on the architecture of the hall, which no longer needed that great size and dignity which in the fourteenth century had made it the most splendid room which has yet been built in great England. It was still the chief apartment, with screens and a minstrels' gallery, a fine entrance porch, and a noble roof; but the size was greatly lessened,

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the dais was frequently omitted, and even a fireplace in the wall sometimes ousted the historic brazier or reredos in the centre of the floor. Large bay-windows became a characteristic. The patriarchal hall is dethroned, but not with the least indignity. To use a musical illustration, it used to be a soloist accompanied by a few instruments ; it is now a leading violin in an orchestra. Here, for example, is a plan of Wolterton Manor House, at East Barsham, in Norfolk. The family rooms are connected with the dais end of a good hall ; and the offices are behind the screens and grouped around an open yard. All the offices are well lighted. They include a kitchen with a larder at the far end and a scullery facing the court ; a dairy, a napery, a pantry, and a large cellar 28 ft. by 18 ft. But the kitchen is isolated (as in many later plans). Between it and the dining-room lie the open yard (13 ft. wide) and the buttery.

In another example of fifteenth-century planning, Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk, the great common room is at the end of a vast quadrangle. It has a porch, screens, and two bay-windows. At the dais end we enter by a door into a long dining-room having a mullioned window at the far end and an entrance porch with a small window on to the court. There are two withdrawing-rooms and both are connected with the dining-chamber. Below them, along the left side of the quadrangle, are bedrooms and a bath-room, with windows overlooking the moat. As to the service quarters, they are connected with the screens of the hall and go around the right-hand side of the quadrangle ; but the kitchen, as usual, is stranded at a great distance from the dining-room. Many writers find fault with other points, and particularly with an unskilled use of passages, necessitating a number of external doors towards the court, and of internal doors between the rooms. Why complain ? The French to this day link rooms together by intercommunicating doors, while we lose a great amount of space on passageways, as London flats bear witness. This point is noteworthy.

Altogether, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century we watch tentative efforts in real planning, the aims being to isolate servants from the household, to give ladies greater comfort and

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privacy, and to show, as Piers Plowman says, that in the hall

“The lord ne the lady lyketh not to sytte ;

Now hath eche syche a rule to eaten by himselve

In a privee parlour”

There was opposition, of course, and evils sprang from many of the improvements, particularly from the gradual decline of patriarchal life in the feudal hall. There was more friendliness between masters and servants when the hall united them together ; and that is why there were patriots of Queen Elizabeth's time who said : “ All eating in chambers should be prohibited, other than such as are ordynarely allowed to keep chambers.” This reads like a criticism on Henry VII., who dined in his bed-room, with his queen on one side and a bishop on the other ; and if the room was large enough, a lord and lady were honoured by a command invitation. The ordinance of Eltham, in 1526, complained that “ sundrie noblemen and gentlemen and others doe much deligthe and use to dyne in corners and secret places, not repaying to the King's chambers or hall.” Thus the feudal spirit was alive and warlike, it clashed with the genius of progress ; and one result was compromise. Important halls continued to be built, and some nobles were so conservative that they handed on the old baronial style of life to Charles the First's reign. But little by little the hall was wittled away until at last it was often nothing more than a vestibule, as in the town houses built by the brothers Adam, or, again, as in those country houses where the staircase faces the front door, and sitting-rooms lie to right and left of an entrance passage. To-day, happily, architects have recognised the value of a great house-place, a fine hall, and their line of progress has three aims :

1. To treat with common sense and a just freedom the best traditions, both Gothic and Classic.

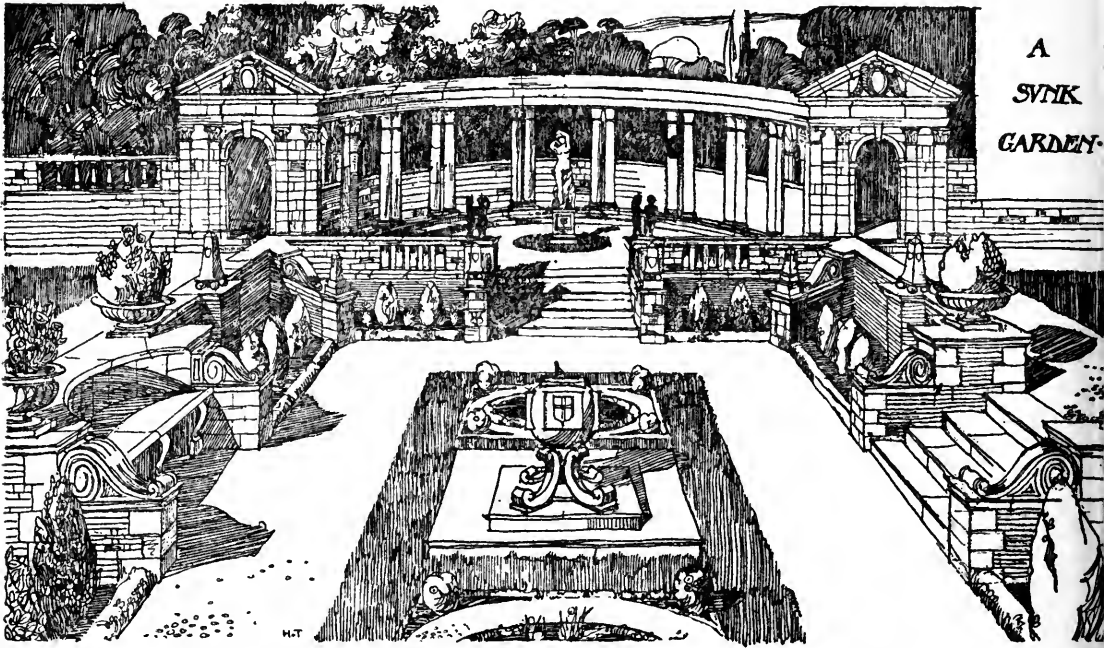
2. To break away from that intricate planning which from the sixteenth century to the eighteenth gradually separated household comforts into so many rooms that they became expensive discomforts. Hengrave Hall, Suffolk, with a catalogue of about 120 rooms, is one example ; and a good many grandiloquent old country houses need for their support the wealth of any

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American heiress who makes her home in a peerage.

3. To arrive at moderation and economy without any loss of essential comfort and privacy.

These are the principles that govern modern work, and we may be sure that the old historic hall will play an important part in their reign—if the present movement of progress be helped by public sympathy and careful public criticism.



A SUNK GARDEN: DESIGNED FOR AN EXISTING HOUSE IN SHROPSHIRE. MATERIALS: WALLS OF BRICK AND STONE, THE PAVEMENT OF STONE FLAGS, THE STATUES IN LEAD

H. Tanner, jun., Architect, London

CHAPTER I.

HINDRANCES TO SUCCESS IN HOME-MAKING

I. Want of Public Criticism.

Social influences are often very ancient, but one among them is far and away older than any other, older and more powerful too : it is family life in homes, for the long story of the hearth is the history of civilisation.

To homes when they improve, age after age, we owe qualities of character that do big deeds and build up great nations ; and from degenerate homes spring national weakness and decay. Family life, then, should be held sacred, a cradle and nursery for high traditions and right ideals, these being the fundamental riches of any people destined to rule the future.

To neglect the home, for any reason, is, indeed, to neglect substance for shadow. Yet the people to-day are supposed not to care a row of pins for domestic architecture ; and that is why newspapers and popular magazines never give space to house building, and design and handicraft. Even those which publish diagrams of headachy chess problems never ask their readers to study plans and elevations ; and so, in the opinions of editors (and many editors try to be in touch with everything that hinges on the people's fancy), chess problems are attractive as well as useful, while home architecture and furnishing are nuts beyond the ability of ordinary folk to crack.

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Can that be true? Is chess more popular than the art of home-making? If so, then the greatest nation in the world has no common sense. But I, for one, do not believe that the British public is a fool, though often treated as such by its paid officials.

Editors are public servants, and a master is not often a hero to his valet, though it is better to look at employers through a magnifying glass when we serve to live, because we never add to our own value by toiling for supposed duffers. And why should the great public be slighted? What is gained by that? The people *think*, for to this day they laugh with Falstaff and feel with Hamlet and King Lear.

If the national value of family life were understood, if it were regarded as topical and entertaining, the household arts and crafts would not be discouraged by the people's editors, but would have in the newspaper press a position equal to that which is given to the other peaceful arts, music and the drama, sculpture and painting, and literary work in various forms. Then the efforts of architects and craftsmen would be chronicled week by week, expert critics giving necessary hints and advice to families; slipshod workmen would soon fear the discipline of printed truth; and two curses of the last fifty years—jerry-building and jerry-furnishing—would then cease to be to homes what foxes (and Budgets) are to henroosts.

Meantime, remember, bad art in household life is more harmful by far than bad art elsewhere, as in theatres and novels, because recreations are temporary, while things that act and react on our fireside ideals are with us all day long, and, when bad, do incessant wrong to the nation as a whole. Yet novels and plays receive much more encouragement; day by day they are reviewed throughout the year; while a district of ill-planned streets with jerry-built houses never gets even a line of criticism. So we guard the amusements of our daily life and neglect the life itself—the home and its needs and traditions.

Not till every newspaper in the country shall give a column at least once a week to house-planning, and another column to the applied arts; not until design and handicraft in all their domestic forms shall receive as much public criticism as do

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pictures and novels, or plays and the opera, can we expect to set on foot a really popular democratic movement at odds with jerry-crafts of every kind. A few months ago, in a technical journal, it was stated that jobs well done in speculative building were much more likely to get workmen "sacked" than to give them a settled position with their employers. Here is an ugly truth indeed; it invites punishment, even prison discipline, as well as detailed evidence in newspapers.

Yet this question has another side, a better side, happily; for domestic architecture, though ostracized by the Press and crippled by gambling tradesmen, has yet found a good many protectors who have built for it fine country houses and town mansions; and, here and there, model homesteads and villages have been put up with skill and taste, giving our cottage crafts something akin to the fresh air treatment of consumptives; so that the prestige of British homes has been kept alive, despite all opposition from the undertakers of house-building, the jerry-speculators and jobbers. And it is also a fact that the most thoughtful work has been illustrated in books which have sold much better than most successful novels, the editions ranging from ten to twelve thousand copies, as in the case of the "The British Home of To-Day" and "The Modern Home"; and every copy was sold. The public wanted the very thing which newspapers and magazines feared to give. There is much encouragement in that, but something more is necessary now. It is this: all craftsmanship for homes needs a settled standard of thoroughness, like that which rules in ship-building, or in the making of motor cars and railway engines; and this we cannot hope to get, I fear, unless heavy legal penalties are put on jerryed work, or unless householders form with architects a Home Defence Society, and hold year by year a Congress of British Architecture.

For a very singular fact is to be noted in our industrialism: namely, that thoroughness rarely appears in its work unless it endangers our lives or appeals to our criticizing love of sport. Home life is not looked upon as a sport; and again, jerry-building and jerry-furnishing do not (as a rule) imperil our lives, like

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ill-made guns and ships ; the injuries they inflict on us are moral and social, and these are not easy to bring into legal evidence. Take the case of thin walls between bedrooms. Do they not destroy the most needful privacy of domestic life, since every sound in one bedroom is heard distinctly in another ? Unquestionably, that is bad from various points of view ; but how would you attack it in court before a judge and jury, representing " Old Father Antic, the Law ? " If you buy a gun and it explodes and hurts you, there is a case against the manufacturer ; but if ill-built walls afflict your family with noises, nerves and colds, do you even think of trying to prove your wrongs and injuries ? Danger here is not visible nor easily provable, as it is in defective drains. These the Medical Officer of Public Health will condemn at once ; but speak to him of walls which are not sound-proof, even against private talk, and he will shrug his shoulders and say : " Yes, of course, it's horrible, but — ! "

Is that a good position for citizens to be in, do you think ? The grievances are urgent, for they strike at the comfort and *morale* of families ; and yet, somehow, anyhow, the means of redress are not only few but very hard to use with effect, so that co-operation here is essential. The Home Defence Society, with a yearly Congress on all domestic affairs, would be invaluable ; and traditions of the hearth are worth organized protection.

II.—The Power of Advertisement.

But a huge difficulty stands in the path of reform : for while householders are disunited, scattered units of unrest, the building and furnishing trades are bound together by the strongest ties of self-interest, and (what is more important still) they advertise profusely. That is an enormous power to-day : because newspapers live by their advertisers and cannot well afford to criticize them. Journalism and advertisement are falling little by little into the position of servant and master ; and certain trade announcements are very bad for householders to read and believe.

It is fortunate, then, that in this matter layfolk may help themselves in two ways. The first is a question of simple business, of common sense. A tradesman does not *expect* to pay for his



CARTOON

A HALL WINDOW IN
STAINED GLASS

Designed by
Frank Brangwyn
A.R.A.

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advertising; he appeals to the public mind and the public purse. When his advertisements succeed, it is *we*—his customers—who pay their cost; and this being so, all advertisers are servants to us, and we should keep them strictly under control. If they speak too much in their own praise, laugh, and refuse to buy their wares; and if they try to persuade us that wooden furniture can be made well in unlimited quantities by one firm, let us make technical enquiries.

Nothing unjust shall be said here about trades and industries; but the business of a book is to tell the truth, and trades are good or bad in proportion to the useful or unuseful service that they do for their supporters. Homes, then, are more important than all the trades which they are invited to encourage; they must hold first place in all criticisms. It is only by protecting the home that we can put the spur of progress into down-going manufacturers. For my own part, I decline to buy furniture that is much advertised, because it cannot afford to enrich newspapers under present-day conditions of heavy rents, rates and taxes, costly materials, excessive competition, and improved wages. If you doubt my opinion in this matter, you have only to consult an expert cabinetmaker, and he will explain to you both the technical hindrances to rapid work and the delays which add considerably to the cost of production. There is one thing above all others that a layman should keep conspicuously before his mind. It is the waywardness of timber, the untractableness of wood.

A manufacturer buys some oak beams and panels from a house three hundred years old; and he thinks that, after those three centuries, they must be seasoned through and through. Yet no sooner does he cut into them and expose new surfaces to the air, than the oak panels begin to shrink a little, so that he has to re-season the old wood by allowing it to lie about in his bench-way for several weeks. Can you then believe that new woods ought to be hurried into furniture, and then sold with the help of costly advertising? It is true that machinery saves time and labour, for it is used even for mouldings; but it does not season timber, as shrinking window-frames often remind us;

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and if you paint or varnish ill-seasoned woods to keep the air from acting on their surfaces, what stability do you give to your immature craft-methods ?

Much time enters into thoroughness ; and hurry is a thief that takes away the life of the household arts. All the advertising in the world will not give back that life : and why should we pay for extravagant advertisements when we buy second and third-rate chairs, tables, cabinets and bedsteads ? The first-rate things are never lavishly advertised, because their cost of production would be raised far too high.

And with this we come to another important matter : that advertising invites the public to swindle itself. Although furniture which is worth a hearty recommendation cannot afford the cost of *much* advertising, it does need *some* public announcement ; and yet it can't be made known at the present time, without a wrongful financial strain. To say that is not to overstate the case : and here is an example. We have in London the best firm of glass-blowers in Europe, a firm with traditions two hundred years old, and its present directors are true artists. In years to come the finest products of the Whitefriars Glassworks will be sought by collectors and treasured by museums. To-day they ought to be familiar to all householders ; but in what way are they to be made known ? Such work cannot afford newspaper advertisements, because that form of public announcement must be continuous and thorough ; and the best things cannot be made or sold in sufficient quantities to justify that cost. In a campaign of advertising, handicrafts will always be defeated by machine-crafts. What, then, is to be done ? Suppose the good handicraft be offered to the big retail distributors, those huge Stores that play the part of a hungry cormorant among the genuinely artistic trades. What happens then ? The cormorant owns that he is hungry, but pleads his inability to swallow anything unless he is tempted by a very big discount, twenty-five per cent. being the least he can take as a help to easy digestion. Now a minimum discount of twenty-five per cent. is to an artist-craftsman a rapid bleeding away of power ; and that is why retail distributors are of no use to him—whatever

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they may be to the public. The bees of trade, the genuine craftsmen, cannot live by giving life to retail business, the cormorant that feeds on discounts.

Unluckily, too, whenever there is a fine chance of showing in a national manner the finest products of our household crafts, some muddle usually arises, as at the Franco-British Exhibition, where the display of pictures was most admirable, while modern design and handicraft were poorly represented, with the result that layfolk did not see the best in our home arts and industries. So :—Can anything be done to get rid of the heavy disabilities which weigh upon all good craftsmen ?

The answer should come, I think, first from the Board of Trade, and then from the County Councils. For there are at present two great pitfalls to be avoided. One is a belief, a quite erroneous belief, that much money capital is required for *all* kinds of productive enterprise. Next, why is the home left unguarded, at the mercy of any unthrifty craze which the arts of selling create ?

It is worth while to examine these things with care.

Craftsmen do not need much money capital. Suppose Mr. Kipling or Mr. J. S. Sargent became a Limited Liability Company with a capital of £60,000. Would he do better work ? And what would happen if his attempt to pay shareholders a high rate of interest caused him to quadruple his output ? These questions are not fanciful and unreasonable. They apply to good handicraftsmen quite as pointedly as to writers and painters. Yet the movement of trade runs counter to individualistic work done under conditions favourable to thoroughness. Huge buildings are put up in the most expensive streets, then stocked with almost as many salesmen as there are articles to be sold ; and yet the public fancies that household things ought to be bought “cheap” in such palatial shops. Surely reason bids us all to invest our money in furniture—and not in furniture *plus* gigantic rates, large interests on an immense working capital, daily advertisements, and other big expenses. If we enrich heavily capitalized cheap jacks, we cannot encourage the best handicraft and design.

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Moreover, a nation is injured when the trade tactics of huge companies defeat and kill the little firms of genuine craftsmen. We have some Chippendales and Sheratons to-day, but their struggle is very hard : it does not tempt young men of genius to face the big battalions of speculative tradesmen, because a true art-craft cannot hold its own against a trade-craft supported by advertisements. The fine glass bowl is smashed by the rude metal pot. The utmost that artist-craftsmen can hope is gradually to win a tiny circle of admirers like that which gathers around a fortunate essayist.

Yet much better times would soon come to them if a little help were given by the County Councils ; not financial help, of course, but help in the displaying of beautiful and essential things. Each town needs and should have a Municipal Show-room of Modern Arts and Crafts, where typical wares by the best men could be seen by all ratepayers. It would be more useful than a museum of old masters, because it would stimulate the genius of our own time ; and besides that, it would bring to public notice the names and addresses of excellent craftsmen. Very often layfolk do not know where and by whom the best household things are made ; nor is it at all easy for them to find out.

And here's another point. We have a society known as the Home Arts and Industries Association, and for years it has helped the public loyally in many parts of the country. Each local branch, without difficulty and much expense, could be made a permanent and useful business, if the County Councils gave support in a practical manner ; and we should all benefit by having in our country-towns and districts settled craft-guilds at variance with the worst tendencies of trade competition in bad or defective workmanship.

Further, whatever an industry may be, whether bad or good, it is made what it is by its purchasing public ; and there is but one way in which layfolk can improve their taste and so become more critical in their judgment. They must learn to look at home-making as the greatest of all arts that any civilised nation can protect ; and that is why I am pointing out, one by one,

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all the principal enemies to success in that art. Before we leave the general question of publicity—too much advertising on the speculative trade side, and far too little on the finer art side—there are several matters to be considered.

For example, what should we think when household furniture is puffed in one column of a newspaper and advertised in other columns? This does not occur frequently, but the pity is that it should ever occur at all. The case would be different if advertisements were subject to press criticism, like other printed appeals for money to the public. Theatres advertise regularly, for instance, and publishers also, but their doings are reviewed, and get many hard blows from the critics. If all advertisers were treated by the Press in that way, good work in the industrial arts ought to be praised by the newspapers: it would improve enterprise and give workmen a pride in their labour. But while trades and shops keep outside the discipline of criticism, a newspaper should never commit a breach of public faith by praising the wares sold by advertisers.

Consider, too, the question of trade catalogues. Vast sums of money are spent on them; they are distributed to the million and many are large and important-looking books. Yet they are not reviewed: and the result is that a manufacturer may hark back to the worst periods of art, crib bad designs and boom them into a fashion. That does not help our living designers, and certainly the public does not gain. So, do not buy from catalogues unless their products are recommended by practical experts of known name. As publishers of books and music invite and quote frank printed criticism, so tradesmen in their catalogues should give a guarantee of specialist opinion. The public must protect itself.

III.—The Shop System as Architect and Decorator.

The shop system is becoming as ambitious as Bottom the Weaver. As Bottom desires to play all the parts in the dolorous comedy of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, so the shop system is eager to free us from our home duties. It wants to do everything. Your taste, your individuality, your hobbies, your private needs, all

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these things you can leave in the hands of the Connoisseur Shop System, which, indeed, tries to be an accepted architect and a master of decorative art. That is a lofty aspiration, to be sure. But do you like it? Should chemists set up as physicians? The upholsterer is nothing more than a distributor of household things; and we should go to him for our own choice of furniture—with an expert to help us with good advice. It is absurd that shopmen should attempt to rival their great master, the profession of architecture.

Yet architects have themselves to blame, at least to a great extent, for they have allowed their names to be connected only with the building of new houses, forgetting the still more important work of showing how new homes can be made—and made with the strictest economy—in houses long since built. That should be the mainstay of an architect's career; and so I have suggested elsewhere that he should have his daily consulting hours, like a doctor, and his fees for advice, so that layfolk may consult him on all problems connected with house furnishing.

IV.—The Abuse of Mechanical Aids in Craftsmanship.

As machines to save time and labour have been invented and perfected, all the criticism in the world will never prevent their use; and it is worth noting that they belong to the art movement of to-day, partly because they have much creative thought, and partly because they are seldom (if ever) harmed by dishonest craftsmanship. Machines, then, in our age of flurry and sham, give us a school for thoroughness in skilled labour, as well as a friend to original genius among those who think out new improvements. This fact is forgotten by many critics; and it is rarely connected with that fondness for mechanical invention which many among the greatest artists have shown, as in the case of Leonardo da Vinci.

But although the creating of machines belongs to the fine arts, the actual things made by machines have few æsthetic qualities; and it is a misunderstanding on this point that leads to an abuse of mechanical help in our household crafts. A manufacturer said to me a few months ago:

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“ Why this outcry against machines ? Some art-critics foam at the mouth almost when they speak of machine-made furniture. Funny ! Why should mechanical jobs be less useful or good than a handicraft ? ”

That question is the only one relating to machinery that concerns any person who is at all keen about the subject of the present book. The points to be dealt with here are the qualities that separate machine-crafts from handicrafts.

What, then, are the qualities of mechanical labour ? They are precision, unvarying accuracy of line, routine effects in the repetition of shapes and patterns, perfect smoothness of surface and a neatness of finish having no emotion, no sympathy, what artists call *no feeling*. Now these qualities are not only unæsthetic, they destroy individuality, the invariable characteristic of good art as of Nature's work ; and they encourage a taste for polished surfaces without life and for rule-and-compass effects. Art, like Nature, scorns a dead level of sameness, and repeats herself with infinite variety, unlike a machine. Many a tradesman would be astonished if you asked him to leave tool marks in a silver bowl ; and others are unhappy if you do not let them spoil the beautiful veining of woods with a thick coat of varnish not unlike treacle. Finish without thought, precision without feeling, without emotion, that is the trade ideal of good work ; and its poor soulless appeal to the eye is common everywhere. Mr. C. F. A. Voysey takes an illustration from architecture :

“ The modern builder,” he writes, “ will have the arrises of his stones drafted and made mathematically square and true, so that the mason can set them with plumb-rule and little or no thought, preferring a mechanical exactness to the work of the painstaking human eye. But let us rather love the soft, yet massive, effect in old buildings, where the angles were put up by trained eyesight.”

Many new buildings here in London are so sharply angular that they hurt the eye : it is painful to look at them : and this applies also to much furniture. Contrast machine-cut chairs in a shop with the best carpenter's furniture of the past, as in old Windsor Chairs, for example, and you will note at once that

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the modern trade craft is not alive ; the wood seems dead, cold and stiff, while the old art is virile and alert ; we feel in it the messages sent by the heart and mind to a workman's hand and tools. There are movement and growth in all sincere handicraft, and other qualities that painters call accidental ; namely, springing from that unreasoned and rapid deftness of touch that gives inimitable notes of style and technical points of interest. Intuition *plus* tradition and original thought : here we have the soul of expert handicraft ; and this we can never get in mouldings cut by machines, in surfaces formed entirely by mechanical polishing, or in designs printed from a roller by steam power.

Indeed, machine labour and expert handicraft are as different as is Beethoven on a piano-organ from Beethoven when interpreted by a true musician. For that reason, no doubt, while recognizing the *use* of machinery, we as householders should be ashamed to accept any *abuse* of mechanical helps in the home arts and crafts. We do not wish to return to the ancient sawpit and its manual drudgery ; but, surely, we do wish to keep those friendly human qualities that clever hands put with ease into useful things ?

V.—The Popularity of Shams.

Truth and simplicity are not popular. Almost everywhere in our homes we find shams. Let an architect show well-designed hinges on a door, and he is at once criticized, above all by women. Yet, the hinges carry the door and their purpose should be recognized frankly. Again, builders are afraid to admit that floor-planks are nailed down, and would blush with shame if the nail-heads were visible. But elsewhere, in work hidden from sight, you are likely to find a neglect which is supposed to save time and money, though its influence must be very bad on the national sense of thoroughness. Who does not know that popular furniture in which the front parts are of oak and the backs of ill-dressed deal ? Let us venture to break away from *that* hypocrisy.

Or, again, just think for a moment of the woods employed



AT ANGLE PARK, CREMBROOK

Mervyn Macartney, Architect, London

PART OF THE SMOKING ROOM

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in the mere trade of furniture making—a maker of many shams. Even the natural colours of woods are tampered with, as if time and careful treatment do not deepen their tints and enrich their pleasant tones. Pale oaks are very much disliked, so fumes of liquid ammonia darken them, or a solution of chromate of potash turns them into brown oak. With the same solution light woods are “converted” into mahogany, just as sycamore and pear-tree put on the appearance of ebony if you ill-treat them with logwood chips, followed by an application of vinegar and steel filings. Imagine the trouble that these deceptions impose on workmen; and for what purpose? If we want furniture with the colour of ebony, why not use lacquer or simple paint, so that everyone may see at a glance that we are not ashamed of painted or lacquered wood? Why be hypocrites?

There is a wood known as Bass Wood, a soft thing with *no wear in it*, yet very popular, because of the ease with which it is stained to look like its betters, mahogany and walnut. This fact and many others should be advertised by the Board of Trade as a warning to the million. Bass Wood should not be used at all for household furniture: and so—

Do not buy furniture without knowing what wood or woods have been used. Let that point be stated in writing.

But there is another class of sham; it is dear to the heart of jerry-builders, who want the unknowing to cry out, “Here’s riches, by Jove!” This sham is a profusion of wasted labour on things which ought to be quite simple and restful. Fenders are too ornate; tiles around the fireplace start out upon you as soon as you open the door of a room; the fire-irons are un-serviceable (the shovel is perforated), and the grate is patched here and there with tawdry cast ornament in no way appropriate to cast-iron work, where designs must be in low, delicate relief and have a modelled softness of form

If the metalwork is bad, how do you like the woodwork?

On that point a great deal could be said, but it will be enough to point out two or three typical mistakes. Doors are often coarsely moulded and chamfered, and have panels too much bevelled, forming deep crevices and wide ledges where dust

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settles. That does not help us to the enjoyment of thoughtful work, for it represents toil misspent, first in the making of the door, and then in the daily act of cleaning it. Why not have simple flat doors ornamented with good hinge-straps?

Jerry-builders never look at enrichments from that standpoint. *Their* mouldings are traps for dust and germs, just like the mouldings and carvings in most modern furniture; these are commonly too coarse and jut out too far. In household things, carving ought not to project from the ground in any part more than a quarter of an inch; and every moulding should tell us that the craftsman knew and was guided by the science of public health in its relation to the perils of dust. Our forefathers knew nothing of those perils: and that is why a good deal of their relief ornament has become obsolete.

Here are a few rules for the detection of make-believes.

1. A good craftsman brings out the special qualities of each material he employs, whether a wood or a metal. He is not ashamed to use deal as deal or iron as iron; and he would refuse point blank to make the iron look like silver or the deal like walnut or mahogany. Even now, in many English homes, common woods are grained to resemble oak: a foolish sham indeed, for it has never deceived any eye.

2. The purpose of ornament on household things—that is, things intended for daily use—is to add beauty to their practicalness; and no ornament can be beautiful if it is inappropriate, as in designs cut into the blades of silver fruit knives, which neither improve the loveliness of silver nor make the knives more convenient. For a similar reason the bowls of table glass ought not to be coloured, first because the transparency of glass has a rare charm of its own, and next because the liquids we put into glasses—beer, cider, perry, wines, and so forth—are colouring agents, very varied and pleasing.

3. Therefore, let all your criticisms be careful answers to practical questions, as for example: What is this article for? What purpose must it serve? and is it fit for that purpose? Is it graceful and well-proportioned? Does that piece of applied ornament interfere with its utility? If not, is the design in

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itself distinctive and beautiful? And last of all, is the article well-made in all respects, or is there some attempt to hide the nature of its material?

4. In furniture of inexpensive kinds there should be very few enrichments, because inlays, carvings, and so forth, increase the cost of production, and it is much better to have inexpensive simplicity than a parade of cheap ornament on cheap things.

5. Beware of patterns, because their incessant appeals to the eye are often like spots of water falling on bare flesh, unobserved at first, perhaps, but causing great distress after a while. The abuse of pattern provokes many nerve troubles, like the misuse of colours.

6. Remember that plain spaces of quiet colour are restful; they resemble silence, while pattern, pattern everywhere is like shouting or loud and incessant talking.

7. It follows that ornament is a sham when placed on things which are beautiful without ornament, as in the case of richly figured woods and veined marbles, which, unfortunately, are often cut up with misapplied carving.

These seven rules are enough to put any householder on his guard against deceptive work; and let him remember that the principles of applied art *must be accepted by everybody*, like counterpoint and harmony in music, or like grammar in the use of a language.

VI.—An Excessive Pride in Home-Making.

This evil is more common than many writers believe, and it gives rise to a great deal of misery. That a home is made for a family, not a family for a home, is a simple truth, yet many women find it an impossible truth to understand. They fret over inevitable things, like the dust and the noise of London; and imagine, perhaps, that Providence has picked them out to bear special worries. Household work then becomes an obsession, a monomania. There's a tragedy in the wear and tear of furniture, and a panic of fretfulness whenever a room is cleaned. No tact is shown in the management of servants. Indeed, corrections are used like a liniment, as if the more they are rubbed in the

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more good they are sure to do. It is forgotten that a fussy management is always bad management, particularly as women do not like to be ruled by women. The art of controlling a home needs much dignity in the mistress and a loyal sense of duty in servants. What can be worse than disordered nerves and over-ordered ideals ?

Some mistresses get up at six in the morning and do an excited day's work before breakfast, with sour results on the charity of their goodwill. Is it not a shame that life by such means should be made more troublesome than fortune ordains ? I know several "dust-finders," most earnest housewives, who drag their fingers across every article of furniture and then say : " There ! *Look at that !* Yet I dusted the room myself only a few hours ago. Could anything be more horrible, more *distressing* ? Who would live for an hour in London if escape were at all possible ? "

And who does not know that pampered type of drawing-room which is occupied by busy servants once a week and by the family once in a blue moon ? Children stand outside the shut door and look with timorous wonder at the key ; it has almost the influence of a ghost story.

These and other things arise from a want of early training in the arts of housewifery. Every kind of art-work appeals to us in two ways : (1) as showing an intuitive aptitude *plus* knowledge and practice, or (2) as showing that aptitude without practice and knowledge. Herein lies the difference between professional work and amateur bungling ; and really it is high time that the arts of housewifery should cease to be amateurish.

In this matter, happily, the Women's Department at King's College, London, is now setting an excellent example, which, perhaps, will be followed by the Board of Education. Every girl ought to be taught the principles of household art and of economics ; and great good will be done by the granting of degrees. Yet there is a danger here. While too much time may be spent on pure science (such as the chemistry of foods), too little thought may be given to the essentials of house-planning and to the principles of house-furnishing. To-day, somehow, good move-

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ments are apt to run impetuously into science ; impetuously, for it is history and taste that our generation needs, not an "inflation of vapoury bubble-blowing" in science made easy.

VII.—Want of Popular Education in House Architecture.

"England's history," says Dr. Jessopp, "is the grand heritage of Englishmen, and when we keep from the masses all knowledge of that we are robbing the people of their birthright." Just so. And the story of the English Home is the kind of history which is most delectable, because it pictures the family life of England through the centuries. Every change in the house plan denotes some change in ideals of the hearth ; and every room has a pedigree as delightful as a fairy tale. Even the smaller articles in a home, from chairs to forks and from windows to fireplaces, have lively, romantic stories that children would love to hear. Yet we do not learn and teach that family patriotism with which the story of the English home abounds. The evolution of the house-plan from century to century is unknown to most layfolk ; and how many persons in a thousand are able to distinguish between the styles of architecture ?—are able to see with a trained interest the buildings amid which they live ? The percentage is very low. Few are able to read the history of British ideals in the great architecture of the past. Lawyers, doctors, writers, have admitted that they could not tell a Gothic church from one in a Classic style ; and it is seldom that Englishmen mention with pride the glories of English craftsmanship. "The simple great ones gone" speak to him in a thousand ways and in countless things, but he heeds not, because he has not been taught to understand. How, then, can the sentiment of patriotism thrive ?

Worse still, there are persons who become quite ill-tempered if you uphold the honour of thoroughness in art and craft. "What fool !" they cry. "Our age is practical ; it will stand nothing that doesn't pay. If the public wants rubbish, rubbish will be manufactured. Business men are tired to death of critics and their idealism."

The only antidote to that anti-social poison is history, social

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knowledge : and in all matters that affect the nation's homes it is from well-educated women that the greatest good will come.

Women, indeed, have an intuitive liking for architecture. At present, usually, it is a liking unguided and untrained, a hindrance rather than a help to good work ; it has that rash self-approval which raw amateurs alone know. Many women, indeed, are of opinion that they can design a house much better than a good architect ; and owing to a fussy parade of this wrong notion no end of trouble often arises during the building of a house. One lady spent several days on an attempt to scheme out a plan on paper, but she forgot both a scale of feet and the size of her site ; such necessary things appeared of no use to her ; and when (after many headaches) her ideas were set down, what did her architect say ? Was he helped ? He was interested, for the lady's plan belonged to the twelfth century. She had given all her attention to her favourite room, the hall, adding an offshoot chamber or two, as in those far-away times.

If wives knew more about architecture, they would trust professional advisers ; and their native feeling for the home arts, ripened by study and experience, would be like Milton's police of manners—a protector of gracious ideals.

I call it a native feeling ; it is inborn and inherited. Domestic architecture has been greatly influenced by women, whose progress in refinement is to be read in the development of house-planning. Motherhood—that divine Stay-at-Home—has been from the first an inspirer of good thoughts in building : thoughts that became traditions, traditions that became comforts and refinements ; and so it is not surprising that the fair inherit as their birthright *the gift of feeling* what a house needs. From feeling to knowing is but a step in education ; and let us hope that women will take that step very soon.

We have now considered the principal hindrances to success in home-making, but there are some of a minor kind.

VIII.—The House-Servant Difficulty.

This, no doubt, is largely a question of education. Among the poor we find the first action of compulsory Board Schools on

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impulsive young minds, generating odd and wayward ideas about personal freedom, as if girls in a tea-shop (for example) were either freer or more comfortable than maid-servants in a house. It is wonderful what girls will suffer both in fatigue and in privation, if they imagine themselves free, or if their vanity is on fire, as in theatrical serfdom of many kinds. But there is another influence, that yearning for excitement which belongs to our hurried times, to our vast teeming cities, and our innumerable printed appeals to the emotional side of the national character. The public nerves are being attuned to the sensational headlines in the people's newspapers. There is nervous unrest everywhere, and it affects everybody more or less. Home life has enemies not in the servant class alone, but in those who shirk domestic cares by living as residents in hotels and boarding houses. Not thus are great nations either built up or kept strong. To be afraid of home life is a singular cowardice indeed, giving to its devotees an impatience quite gipsy-like ; and what sort of citizen qualities can we expect from that ?

The hotel-families blame the servant difficulty. "We are here," say they, "because cooks and housemaids make our homes intolerable." But these martyrs forget, first that they owe a duty to the State, which forbids them to give up their homes, and next that the art of managing servants can be learnt, and should be taught at schools.

All social difficulties have a long pedigree, and it is quite easy to learn from the history of the English house-plan what the servant problem owes to the past ; for domestics have had many grievances ever since the communal life of the hall vanished with the mediæval customs that Bishop Grosseteste and others tried to keep alive. When the desire for privacy and refinement ruled strongly among householders, the distance between servants and families became greater and colder ; and as no general effort was made to give servants a pride in their work, they grew discontented, and rebelled from time to time, as during the age of Dean Swift. Much may be learnt about this matter from the dark old basements in many of our town houses ; and certainly our own customs are often very unkind, as is proved by the

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bad accommodation for servants in villas and in many flats. Justice, we forget, is the best of all peacemakers and economists.

Let us then be just. We are all servants : that is a rule without exception, for the King himself is our paid servant : but who can serve with goodwill when there is no moral incentive from that kind of duty called pride of craft ? Here we touch the mainspring of the unrest and discontent among domestics, who are ashamed of their position. Let us make them proud of it. The degradation of receiving " tips " should be done away with ; and all indoor servants should have their competency certified by the Board of Education.

IX.—Differences of Taste between Women and Men.

Idiosyncrasies of taste are very warlike, whether ignorant or not. Experts squabble, and artists are not at one in their criticisms of the same style or school. It is only the great—the Scotts and the Goethes—who have in the arts a universal tolerance, a vast goodwill ; and so it is well worth noting that women and men are separated by inclinations of taste that make mischief, if they are not held carefully in order.

Women spend so much time indoors, working for their homes, that their tastes (when guided by knowledge) should have ascendancy there ; and it ought to be easy for men to accept this principle of justice. I do not mean that a woman's taste should reign autocratically ; its authority should be that of a constitutional ruler, a Queen Victoria, inviting and accepting the help of men. A wise and attractive compromise : *that* is the best marriage between masculine and feminine qualities of taste, for genius itself is always partly feminine, partly masculine, dual-sexed ; and that is what the art of a home should be.

From the female side we get lightness with brightness, and sparkling neatness, delicacy, refinement ; and from the male side, reticence of style, invention, vigour, and a regard for orchestral composition. Women—unless they have studied with care the principles of house-furnishing—are apt to forget that a room is nothing more than a background for a living picture of home life, hence it must be treated as a background : that is,

THE
METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM OF ART
NEW YORK



LOVING CUP IN BEATEN SILVER, ENRICHED WITH JEWELS AND ENAMELS
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Alexander Fisher, Designer and Craftsman

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it must be quiet, not "fussy," so as to lie behind the foreground figures, who are men, women and children.

X.—Local By-Laws.

At a time when jerry-work is common, it is odd to think of the many building by-laws that act and react on house architecture. Though designed to be of use to the country, they have not checked the speculative builder, and very often they prevent good work by opposing local traditions of both style and workmanship. In some counties, for example, thatched roofs are forbidden; in others, weather-boarded walls; and so it is high time that all these by-laws should be examined by a commission of experts appointed by the Board of Trade.

The illustrations chosen for this chapter represent, in various ways, two historic qualities in English design and craftsmanship: grace with strength and quietness of style. Fussiness and pretention are modern qualities, first introduced by the factory system and steam labour, which displaced the old craftsmen with their traditional methods and self-respect, and lowered the national sentiment of thoroughness. Since then many efforts have been made to renew the ancient craft spirit, as by Pugin, Ruskin, and William Morris, then by the Arts and Crafts Society, "The Studio Magazine," the Home Arts and Industries, the Art Worker's Guild, and the architects and designers illustrated in this book. So it is the aim here to show in each picture some quality or other which used to be national, qualities springing from the same Anglo-Celtic (or Saxo-Celtic) wish to be thorough and sincere without any such parade or affectation as would invite ridicule.

The French, so afraid of ridicule in society, are more venturesome in Art, showing qualities of style less temperate than those which are typically English. The way in which Chippendale got rid of the reversed angles and the gilt that came to him from France is an example of the difference in self-control that parts the quiet English genius from its more ornate French rival.

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To this day Englishmen hate mere eloquence ; a florid display of feeling is at once resented as bad taste ; and this national self-discipline, arising from a fear of ridicule, is the quality we need in the household arts.

Turn, for example, to the colour-plate of Mr. Frank Brangwyn's working design for a billiard-room, with its simple wall-panels and its frieze, and you will find three good old English traits : a steadfast purpose, and sober design, and complete workmanship. Mr. Mervyn Macartney, in the smoking-room at Angley Park, Crembrook, shows vigour with grace in the treatment of wainscoted walls ; the style here is Classical, and observe how the ceiling is divided into compartments. There is visible support for the floor above. The ceilings that we know to-day are usually large spaces of white plaster stretching above our heads like sheets ; we do not know whether the plaster is firmly fixed or not, but accept it as an article of faith, though it falls from time to time. Ceilings, indeed, are the most dangerous shams in our homes, just because their structural fitness does not receive enough attention. There may be a ton of furniture in your room upstairs, yet the ceiling under that weight has no visible supports. Altogether, as a ceiling may be called the under side of a floor, it should *look* safe ; and because it forms a large area of space in a room, its treatment should be entertaining to the eye. Mr. W. H. Bidlake, in his oak hall at Almondsbury, has a ceiling built in one old English way, a good way, simple and attractive ; and if critics tell us that beamed ceilings divided into compartments harbour dust, our reply is this : pneumatic sweepers have been invented and fear of dust cannot reconcile us to any appearance of unsafety in dangerous things.

Other illustrations show in modern work the adaptation of mediæval traditions as in the stately houses in Cadogan Square, Chelsea, by Mr. Norman Shaw, R.A. The presence of Gothic is always easy to detect in such familiar details as the following : bay-windows and oriel windows, mullions and transoms (*i.e.*, upright and horizontal bars of stone in window openings), drip-stones, leaded glass, gables and gable-crests, porches, turrets,

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spires, battlements, gargoyles, pointed arches, etc.; and it is jolly to note how modern lovers of Gothic employ their traditional material. They have much variety. Contrast Mr. Brierley's house at Bishopthorpe, York, with the following illustrations:

1. Nether Swell Manor, Gloucestershire, by Mr. E. Guy Dawber, built of local stone (local materials are always best because in harmony with the landscape), with charming windows, mullioned and transomed, a roofing of stone slates and alert simple gables.

2. Mr. Ernest Newton's Cottages in Gloucestershire, admirably planned, and quietly picturesque. Also his House at Wokingham, of red brick and stone, gabled, and with windows transomed and mullioned, some in bays. There is a stalwart dignity and reserve; the style, severe but graceful, commands respect like a fine upright soldier.

3. Mr. H. S. Henderson's Moorland House, a rustic type of architecture, the style being that of Yorkshire homesteads belonging to the 18th century; they accord very well with northern landscapes. The unity of a house with its environment is very important.

4. A cottage in Surrey by Mr. Curtis Green, with such a high-pitched roof as Ruskin favoured.

Mr. Dawber's design recalls to memory that energetic style which, inherited from the last form of Gothic in England known as Perpendicular, gave charm, distinction, and variety to houses in the Cotswold districts. Mr. Newton understands the inner essence and the life of the same Gothic; and it is clear also that the Yorkshire moorland manner belongs to the same family tree of traditions. It descends from that manly Gothic out of which Tudor houses sprang; and what is there to equal the nobly serene homeliness of Tudor country-houses?

The Mill House at Four Elms, Kent, by Mr. Gerald C. Horsley, shows alterations and additions to a type of small home which was very popular rather more than fifty years ago. Its ground plan was square; the principal door placed in the centre of the entrance front, admitted you into a passage hall; a staircase faced the front door; two sitting-rooms lay on your right and

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left, with a kitchen behind them, and a scullery or wash-house. To adapt this plan to the modern needs of a summer home, Mr. Horsley made the old dining-room into a good entrance hall, with a new porch ; at the side a large drawing-room was built on, and the natural slope of the site allowed it to be more lofty than the other ground-floor rooms. The old scullery was transformed into a dining-room, the old kitchen into a pantry ; and a new scullery and kitchen, with servant's offices, form a wing behind, one storey high, with lines determined by the shape of the site.

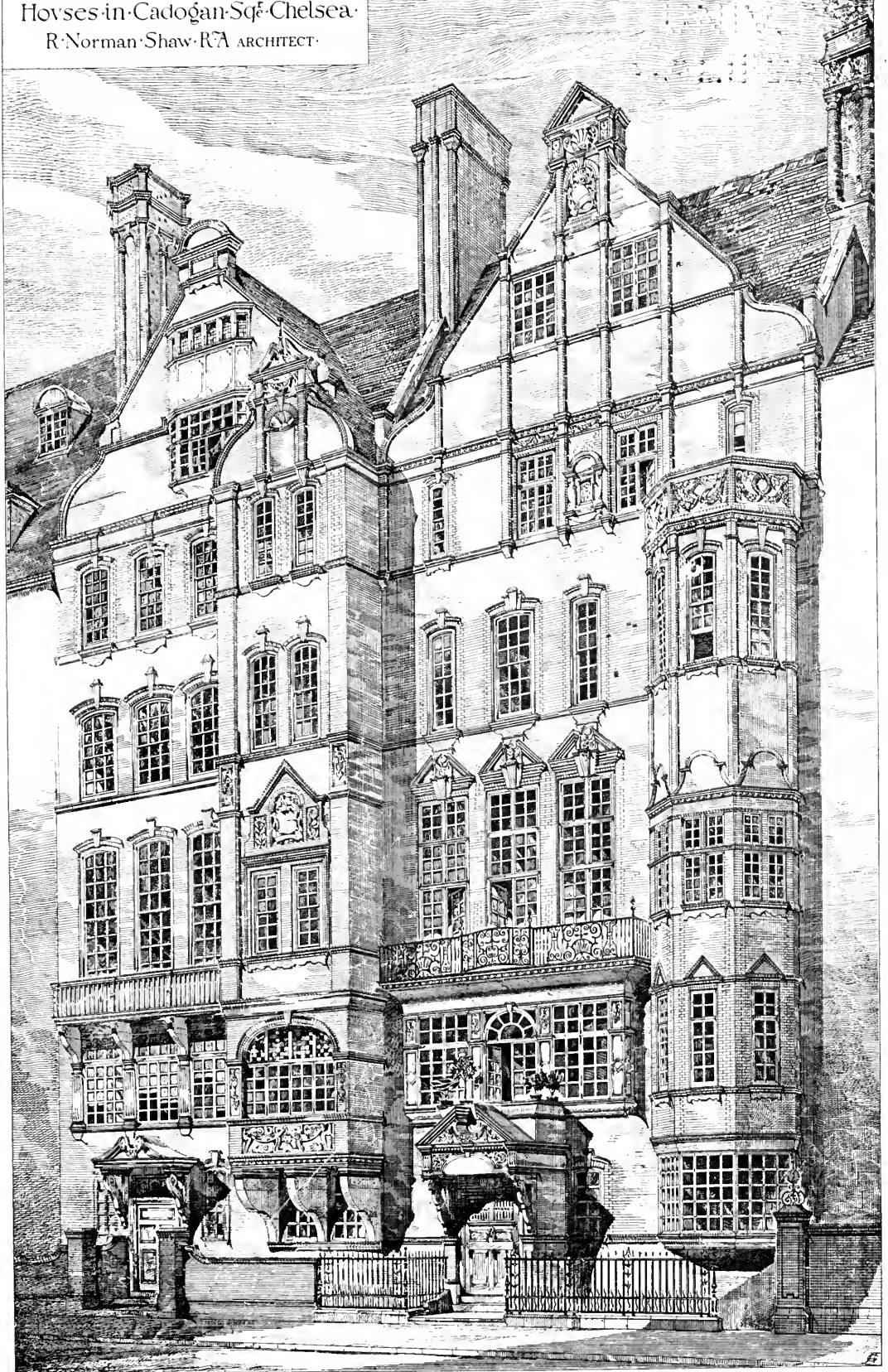
As regards the remaining illustrations, Mr. Brangwyn's design for a hall window in stained glass has the charm of fine colour with an original feeling for decorative composition ; and the thin grooved strips of lead—the leaded *canes*—by which the pieces of glass are held together, each one joined to its neighbour, are cleverly managed and aid the general effect. There is a good Loving Cup by Mr. Alexander Fisher ; and Mr. C. R. Ashbee's panelled room in a small country house has several points of interest, as in the contrast between the oak and the white wainscoting. White woodwork has long been an English tradition, as in Queen Anne houses, so called ; and white walls have one practical advantage : not only are they pleasant to the eye, but they reflect more artificial light than any other colour—a point to which I shall come back in a later chapter.



INTERIOR OF A SMALL COUNTRY HOUSE IN HERTFORDSHIRE, PANELLED WITH OAK AND WITH PAINTED WHITE WOOD. THE WORKMANSHIP WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE GUILD OF HANDICRAFT

C. R. Ashbee, M.A., Architect, London

Houses in Cadogan Sq. Chelsea.
R. Norman Shaw, R.A. ARCHITECT.

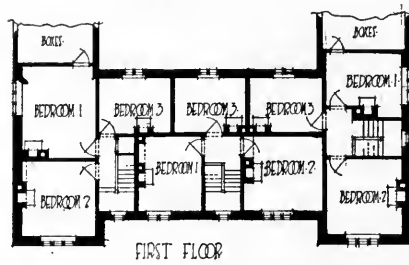
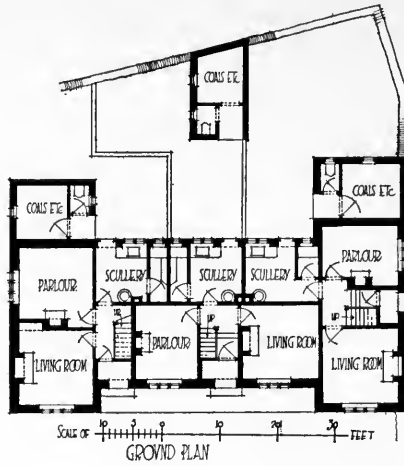


HOUSES IN CADOGAN SQUARE, CHELSEA

BUILT IN 1877

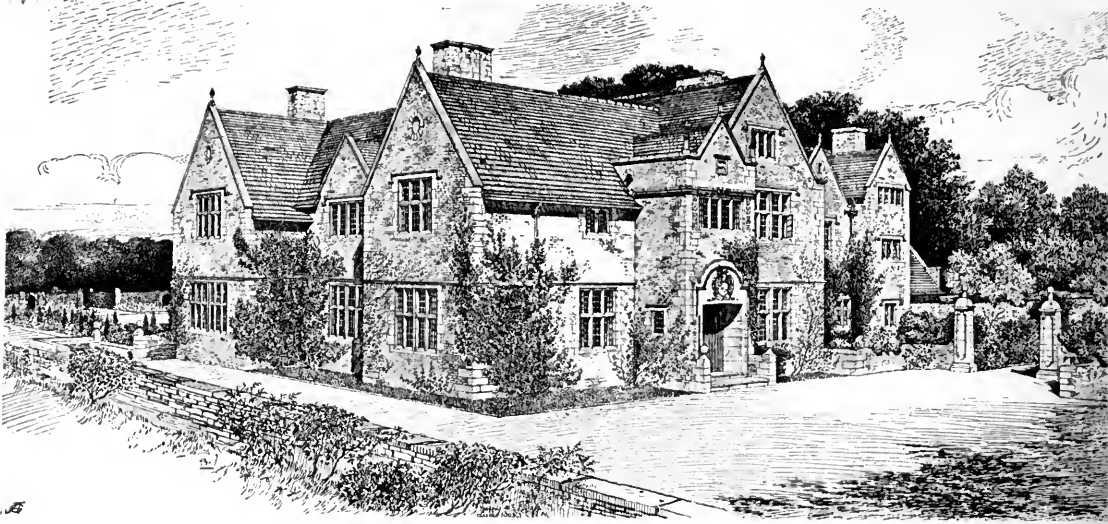
REPRODUCED FROM A DRAWING

R. Norman Shaw, R.A., Architect, London



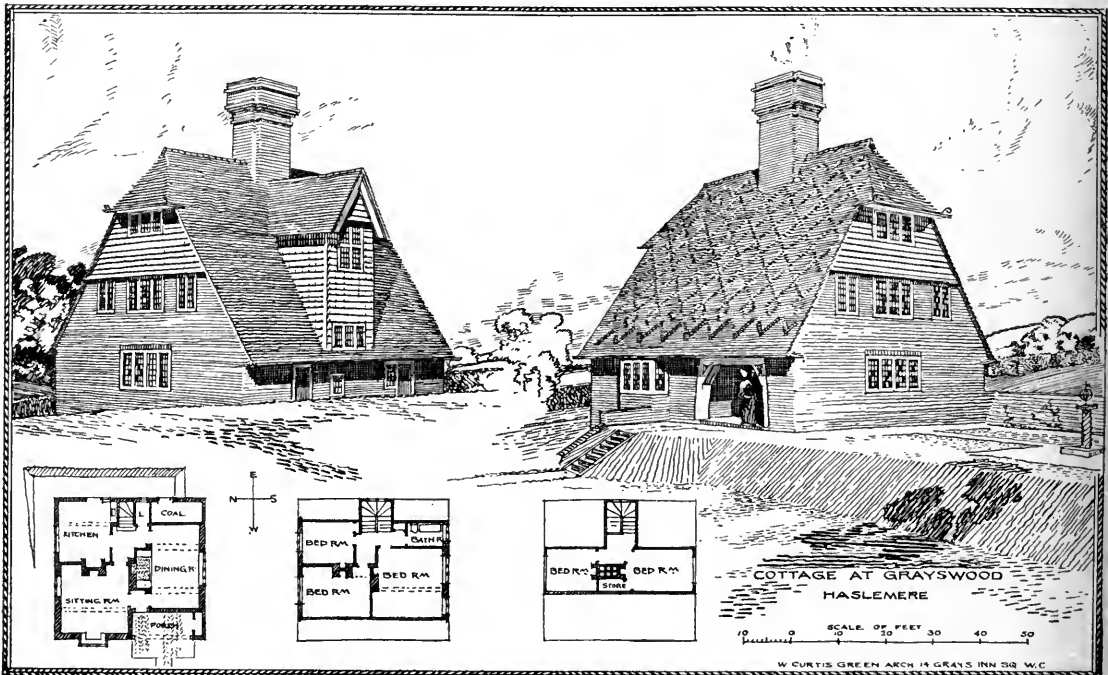
COTTAGES IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE, ELOQUENT OF THE COTSWOLD STYLE. FROM A DRAWING BY WINTON NEWMAN

Ernest Newton, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



VIEW OF THE ENTRANCE FRONT, NETHER SWELL MANOR, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, THE SEAT OF SIR JOHN MURR SCOTT, BART. THE MATERIALS ARE:—LOCAL STONE, STONE FOR THE MULLIONED WINDOWS AND STONESLATES FOR THE ROOFING. GOTHIC SCHOOL

E. Guy Dawber, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



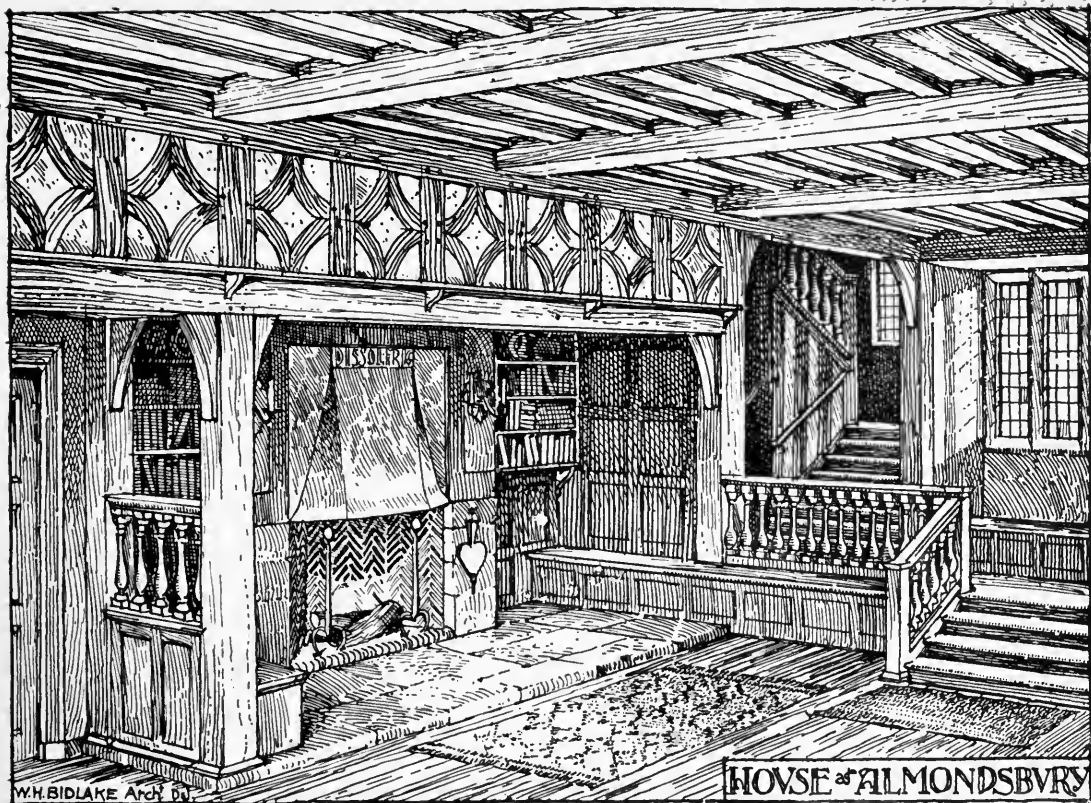
A COTTAGE IN SURREY, AT GRAYSWOOD, HASLEMERE, SHOWING THE INFLUENCE OF KENTISH FARM-HOUSES

W. Curtis Green, A.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



LIBRARY ROOM. DESIGNED FOR MESSRS. THURSTON & CO. MATERIALS, TONED OAK INLAID WITH LEAD AND IVORY THE METAL WORK OF SILVER AND A PAINTED FRIEZE.

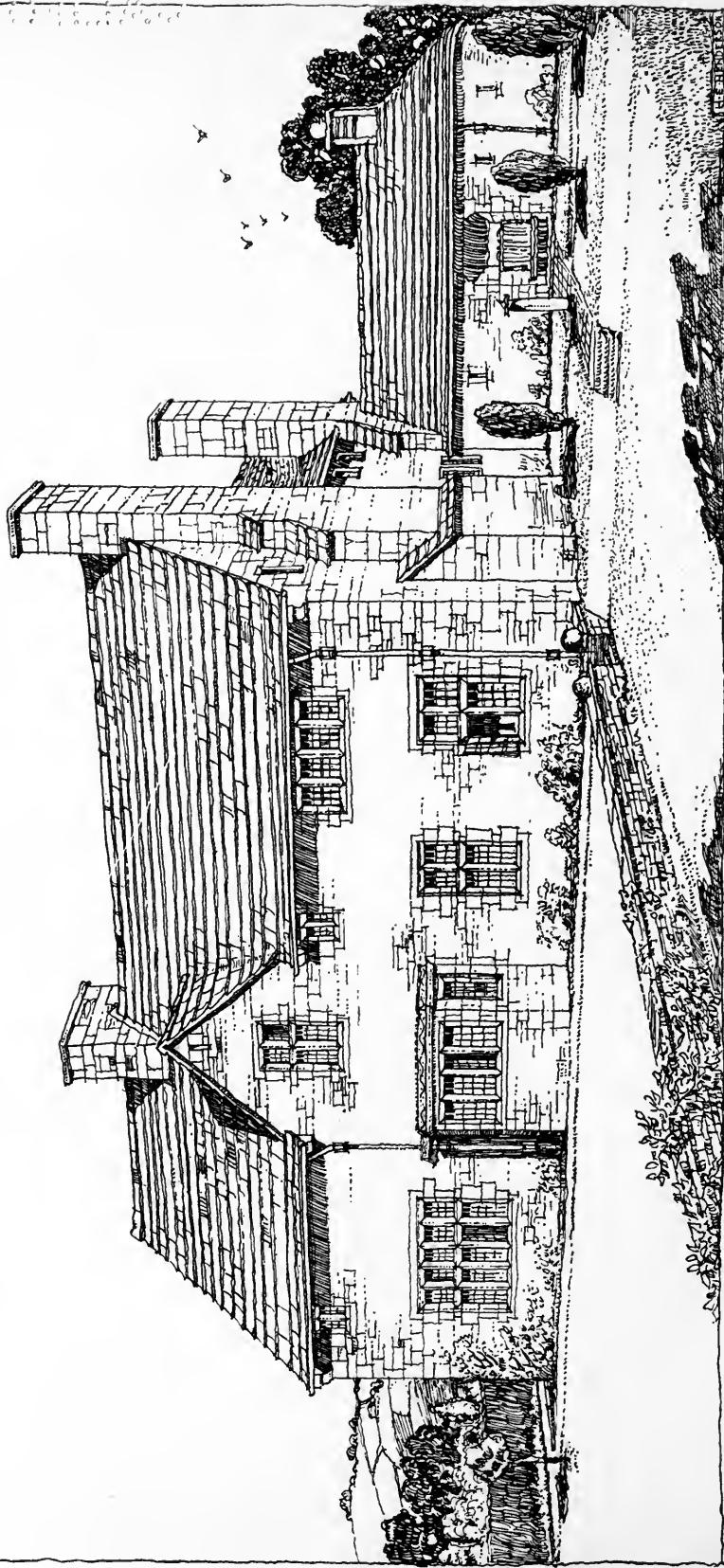
Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A., Designer and Painter



HALL IN A HOUSE AT ALMONDSBURY. OAK TIMBERWORK AND PANELLING. THE DIFFERENCE OF FLOOR LEVEL IS AN ADAPTATION TO THE SLOPE OF THE GROUND

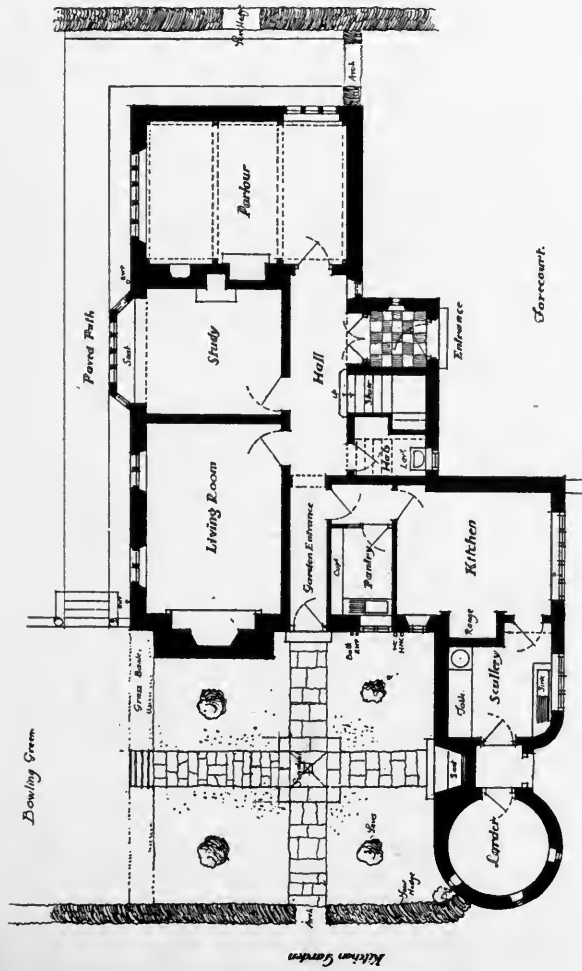
W. H. Bidlake, M.A., Architect, Birmingham

HOUSE IN LANGSTROTHDALE,
YORKSHIRE. Harold E. Henderson, Arch't.

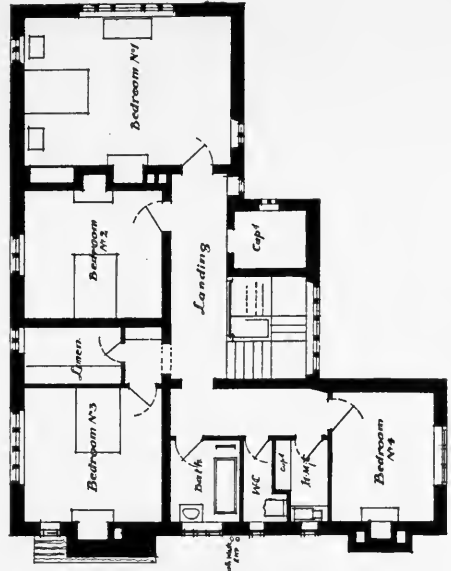


MOORLAND HOUSE IN YORKSHIRE, WITH WALLS OF LOCAL RUBBLE STONE AND ROUGH STONE SLATING FOR THE ROOFS, DESIGNED IN THE STYLE OF THE MOORLAND HOMESTEADS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Harold E. Henderson, Architect, York



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



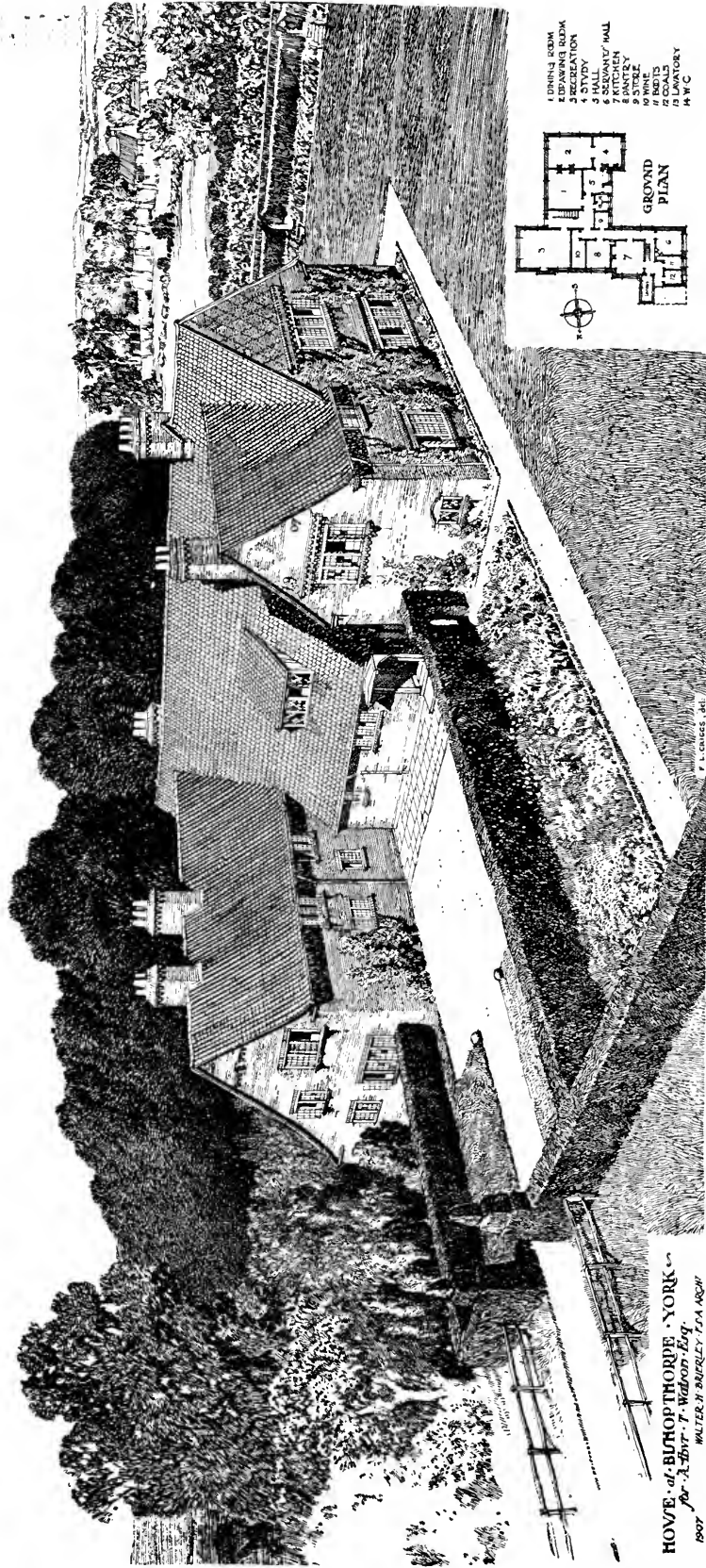
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

PLANS OF A MOORLAND HOUSE IN YORKSHIRE

SEE THE PERSPECTIVE DRAWING ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE

Harold E. Henderson, Architect, York

COUNTRY ARCHITECTURE



HOVE, *co.* BUSHOP THORPE, YORK.
 For A. BURT, T. WILKINSON, Esq.
 WALTER H. BRIERLEY, F.R.A.B.C.
 1907

PERSPECTIVE DRAWING OF A HOUSE IN YORKSHIRE. HAND-MADE BRICKS TWO INCHES THICK FOR ALL EXTERNAL WALLS, AND RED HAND-MADE PANTILES FOR THE ROOFS; ALL THE EXTERNAL WOODWORK IS OF OAK, AND OAK IS EMPLOYED FOR THE INSIDE FINISHINGS

Walter H. Brierley, F.R.I.B.A., F.S.A., Architect, York

CHAPTER TWO

HOUSEHOLDERS AND THE HOUSE PLAN

Many matters have to be considered here ; they are scattered and hard to focus, so I have hesitated long how to treat this chapter. Perhaps the simplest method, and the most useful, is a sort of catechism, a series of questions and answers. Thus :—

Why is planning all important ?

Because it means three essential things : (a) arrangement, that is, a thoughtful, thrifty, and convenient use of space for given purposes ; (b) a just consideration of many details subordinated to a general scheme, in order that many parts may be united into a whole, as in orchestral music ; and (c) comfort, not comfort for a day nor for a year, but comfort while the house lasts.

The use of space for given purposes cannot be convenient when it does not suit the common needs of a family : and so this point determines the other two. Yet amateurs rarely try to understand what it means. On some details they have correct notions, but these bulk out so largely in their minds that other matters are forgotten. Seldom do they remember how complicated house-planning has become with the progress of science.

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While you think of isolated ideas, for example, your architect has to view every one of your needs in relation to the area of your site and the amount of money you are prepared to spend ; and among those needs are many which did not exist a few generations ago. There must be perfect sanitation now, and a good supply of hot and cold water ; gas and electricity demand much attention ; and your open fireplaces require the latest and best invention for the use of coal with economy, so that your house may be snug in winter. You do not wish to feel that shiver of cold which runs through mediæval literature. Winter during the Middle Ages was feared by all householders, however befurred the wealthy made their clothes. To-day, warm rooms are necessary ; indeed, a house which cannot be kept warm in winter is a crime in building, and should be punished as such. These are some of the thousand details which a good, reasonable architect has to keep in mind ; and very often they trouble his designs. It is not easy to do handsome work in the midst of practical hindrances. When an architect's thoughts are underground with the drains, your mind, perhaps, is all agog concerning an extra cupboard in some part of the house where cupboards are not usually put.

What, then, should be your attitude towards your chosen architect ?

If you cannot trust his experience and judgment, if you feel that you must try to guide him with your trifling bit of practical knowledge, *why* did you choose him ? Do you put on airs of authority when consulting a specialist doctor ? or would you argue with Lord Roberts on tactics and strategy ? Housewives should ask themselves these questions, because they are apt to be sweet tyrants as soon as they come into working touch with an architect. I will not say, with Mr. Andrew Lang, that women form a "belligerent sex" ; but in matters of house-building they are certainly warlike. It is for the sake of peace and quietness that architects compromise rashly, not remembering that lady critics soon forget how compromises were made at their own urgent wish ; then the architect is blamed, and his alleged blunders are discussed whenever a new visitor sees the house.

HOUSEHOLDERS AND THE HOUSE PLAN

Many a good commission is lost in that way. It is fatal to make unwise concessions.

Yet the relations of a client with her architect (I keep to the lady because in this matter housewives commonly rule their husbands) are very difficult to state with fairness; so many things have to be remembered. Still, the following story will help us to arrive at a just decision. Mr. Gladstone had once to speak in North Wales on certain matters connected with the mineral wealth of the Principality, a subject almost new to him, so he appealed to a specialist, a mining engineer, Mr. Isaac Shone, I believe. Mr. Shone was nervous when he saw the great man, and said: "I don't know how or where to begin, sir; please tell me what you know already." "I know nothing real about the subject, Mr. Shone," came the quick reply. "My mind here is a blank sheet of paper, and I want you to write on it. Let us begin." No pupil could have been more patient than W. E. G.; and when he made his speech he astonished his master, so firmly had he gripped the whole theme. Modesty is often like an alembic, transforming things received; while the self-belief of a raw amateur resembles a sponge, which gives back fewer drops of water than it absorbs.

Surely, then, an architect's client should be modest with that Gladstonian tact and patience. What has she to say which other ladies have not said to him? The only new and helpful things are personal to herself and her family; for a house has one point in common with a suit of clothes: it must fit a given person, and be distinctive in 'cut.' Setting aside the personal needs, clients have very little to teach their architects, while an architect has a vast deal to teach them. His aim, too, is to please his clients, and this he cannot do if worried by unceasing suggestions and criticisms. Could you write even a letter if someone at your elbow bothered you about the spelling of simple words?

The point at which we arrive is this: that an architect must be trusted as a specialist. He is the servant of *your* needs under the direction of *his* own knowledge and experience; he has nothing to do with your whims, nor with your wish to be

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an expert in a subject requiring a long apprenticeship and a lifetime of practice. Be your own architect if you like ; employ a builder, and treat him as a paid menial, a person of no account, a human machine to carry out orders ; but you will soon be glad to call in an architect to remedy your mistakes. There is no faith-healing in the medical art of house construction.

Are we then to believe that an architect should rule the roost, an autocrat rather than an artist ?

Certainly not ; nor will he wish to be autocratic. He wants you to understand and to approve his designs which show his attempts to please you, by adapting the present practice of architecture to your wants, customs and hobbies. He is glad to compromise on any point not at odds with the great principles of his art ; but when he tells you to keep away from a certain thing, do not hesitate to follow his advice, for he has nothing to gain and much to lose by deceiving a client. Also, the art of compromise never does harm when both parties trust each other and know their subject.

Having come to a reasonable decision on this topic (*i.e.*, the relationship of clients with their chosen architect), we can pass on to another matter.

A plan for one house ought not to be used for another. Why ?

There are several reasons. Thus, for example, the conditions that govern a plan are never precisely the same in any two cases. These conditions are of two kinds : (1) human and personal, and (2) climatic and topographical. The first have already been summed up in my comparison between a house and a suit of clothes ; and the second, here in England, are very complex, owing to the many local styles which have been handed down to us in beautiful buildings.

So here is a simple rule to define those conditions that belong to us and our varied needs and preferences :

A new Home should represent three qualities, a distinctive good taste in the owner, a distinctive good style in the architect, and a distinctive harmony between the house and its environment, its landscape setting.

The last quality brings us to the conditions of climate and

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HOUSEHOLDERS AND THE HOUSE PLAN

topography, the local considerations, which are more important than mere questions of site. Every thoughtful person knows that two sites are never the same ; there is always some difference in aspect, in the shape and slope of the land, in the position of trees on the site areas, and in the surrounding landscape ; so that you ought never to choose a plan illustrated in a book, because it was designed for special wants and a given position. What you need is a plan for your own wants and your own site ; and caution suggests that a good architect should help you to choose the site, for he will give you reasons for this and that, and work out his scheme on the spot, neglecting no landscape features of any importance. All trees will be worked into his garden plot ; and he will show you how necessary it is that the garden and the house-plan should grow up together both in his mind and in yours. Then, before a line is put on paper, he says :

In what style is this house to be ?

At present, our domestic architecture is so eclectic, so cosmopolitan, that many towns and countrysides appear like a patchwork history of building. What style indeed ! Has not the Wizard of Time conjured up scores for us to choose from, many quite foreign to English traditions ? and is our choice to be made by argument (which would take a year at least), or by dipping the hand into a lucky bag and drawing out a paper labelled " Queen Anne," or " French Renaissance," or " Cottage Italian," or " Tudor," or " Scotch Baronial," and so on and on ? It is horrible to get lost in this welter of styles. None of us can tell where he may find himself ; perhaps in a Chinese Pagoda on the top of Ben Nevis, a nasty adventure. Let us look out for a clue to guide our steps through a labyrinth of pitfalls and perplexities.

Have faith in local styles and methods ; encourage them, for they go well with their neighbouring landscapes, and each is the result of improvements carried on through centuries. Some local styles are forbidden by district by-laws ; but another provincial style will do, for it is genuinely national, an English product, and that is much to be thankful for. To support my own views in this matter, here is the opinion of Mr. E. Guy Dawber, F.R.I.B.A.,

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who has written admirably on peasant styles of building and whose own work belongs to the great old British School :

“The old houses, and particularly the smaller ones, were built by local men and with local materials, and there was no great transformation of style in the work done by two successive generations. Building was traditional, and change the result of slow evolution. Houses in the same district kept for many decades their distinctive type, their family likeness ; and even when various kinds of material were employed in a district, the transitions of style were much less marked than they are to-day. At the present time, indeed, houses in the same neighbourhood are built in widely varying types and of many imported materials, and this produces violent contrasts of effect, and many jarring notes in a landscape. Our choice of materials becomes ever the more varied ; almost every day something new is imported—new woods, new marbles, tiles, slates, and stones, new metals, pigments, stuffs, etc. ; and all these things, and the facility with which they are carried about the country, tend to make architecture cosmopolitan in character, and by this means the the local styles, so associated with different counties, are being ousted and lost. It is a great pity. Architects should encourage local traditions, industries and trades, for it is better to build in the materials which have been used for centuries than with those which are out of harmony with our landscapes.”

Why not follow that excellent advice ? Follow-my-Leader is a good safe game ; and in art the past leads always. We cannot be better than our forefathers ; and to equal them we must add worthily to their happy thoroughness in charming traditional work. Like ourselves they imported some things for their homes, fir wood from Norway and glass from France, Italy, and Flanders ; tapestries, too, and many other kinds of rich textile fabrics. But they were not cosmopolitan in their peasant styles of house architecture ; and that is why their example here is an inheritance, an invaluable legacy, filled with quiet good thoughts and right feelings. Village builders were excellent architects then, in the elastic seasons of the imperishable past ; and it is well that we should ask ourselves :

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What is the chief lesson that we as householders learn from historic types of English homes?

It is this : that to be masters of the future in art we must understand the past, and use with reverence all traditions which can be adapted to our own needs and customs. This truth has received less attention than it deserves during the last twenty years. Instead of wishing to do something well, which used to be the aim of all deft craftsmen, we strain after newness, and talk vapoury nonsense about originality, forgetting that genuine talents have always drawn into themselves many old tributaries of thought, just as great rivers swallow up replenished brooks and streams, as well as the rain falling on all alike. The most original men are always conquerors ; for they invade their predecessors' work, and make it their own ; and this was done, too, century after century, by the ancient craft-guilds with their system of apprenticeship. No one then thought, as a good many artists think to-day, that styles are to be invented by anyone who takes delight in startling effects, who tries desperately hard to be original and novel. Nothing of that kind endures. Much of what we see around us to-day is ephemeral, a sort of journalism in architecture or in some other Art. All permanent work is like the fields, where fresh harvests grow from primeval soil enriched by improving husbandry. And so—

Can this truth be made clearer to lay minds by some practical argument or consideration?

Yes. From your own experiences you may get a guiding principle here. Turn, for instance, to an illustrated book of animals, and you will find that those which are new to you often seem strange and eccentric, while those which you know well have attraction. There is grace in every bit of Nature's infinite variety, but unaccustomed eyes and minds do not always see it as graceful. That is why commonplace good work in the arts has ever been more popular at first than new things of genius, in which something original is added to familiar methods and forms. There is much acquired taste in the appreciation of uncommon beauty and greatness ; and when this fact is forgotten in house architecture, lasting disappointments may be

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the result, because houses cannot be hidden away, like books and pictures, like music and statuary. However good or bad, a house lasts for a considerable time, out there in the open for everybody to see. A thousand critics cannot pull it down, and public hatred does not make it wear out. Its life is the life of mortar and of bricks or stones.

Clearly, then, eccentricities are out of place in house architecture. It is the familiar that we need in this always public art ; and hence the importance of traditional local styles. Each one is a fine language in which a modern architect can express himself with freedom and distinction.

From this subject we turn to another of equal value :

What provincial types of house are particularly useful as models to ourselves ?

There are a good many, and we may classify them under five heads :

1. *The Timbered Styles*, as in Cheshire, Shropshire, and Lancashire. These are charmingly national, and very pleasant to live with (when district by-laws give permission). They have one advantage that cannot be rated at too high a value : a timber house adapts itself very readily to most English landscapes, for our fields have not yet forgotten that they were cleared forests lands. But do you deserve to live in a house the lineage of which goes back to the Saxon timber halls ? It is a rude question, perhaps, and yet it must be asked, because timber-nogging is a form of architecture that tries the patience of laymen. Woods are sure to warp and twist a little, and this may give you keen draughts, like those which troubled King Alfred when he invented lanterns to protect his candles. But if you go to a specialist architect, like Mr. Ould, he will warn you of that annoyance, and tell you how very easy it is, after the timber has settled, to remedy all defects. That done, a timber house gives no further trouble. It will wait for your great-great-grand-children.

The popularity of these carpenters' styles has called into being a modern substitute, a detestable sham, for can anything be falsier in construction than the imitation in plaster of half-

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timbered work, the plaster being painted to resemble wood? How patient the human mind can be with untruth! As if plodding to get used to it!

2. *The Brick Styles.* These are sometimes mixed with flint, as in East Anglia, where brick and flint buildings have pantiled roofs diapered with glazed tiles—a peaceful and winsome type of house, warm, various, and cosy with a rural homefulness. Then, in Berkshire and the Thames valley, red bricks are employed with skill and taste, at once simply and richly; the windows have white frames, and shine in the russet walls with cheery pictures of the sky.

Those white windows recall to memory the style familiarly known as Queen Anne, though it existed both before and after that good lady's reign. It was not a style favoured by architects, who, indeed, jeered at it as barbaric; for architects in those days were very serious men indeed, having made up their minds to be Roman Classics in England, despite the wet discomforts of rain and snow. That ambition required a dogged earnestness and no sense of humour. An English officer, General Wade, once complained that his Palladian house was uncomfortable, beautiful outside, perhaps, but all inconvenience within. So Lord Chesterfield told him to hire a lodging over the way and look at a home untenanted.

As a revolt against the Palladian school, the Queen Anne style was very welcome; and we ourselves owe a debt of gratitude to the rustic builders who evolved it out of old traditions. This occurred at the end of the seventeenth century, when brick had become the usual building material, and when workmen learnt in their apprenticeship two sets of craft methods, one Gothic (*i.e.*, mediæval) and the other Classic (the Renaissance style imported from Italy). The Gothic methods kept alive an affection for tall gables, and steep roofs, and sunny bay-windows, while the Classic methods introduced new forms and mouldings; and it was with these mixed elements, aided by some Dutch influence, probably, that English builders formed the Queen Anne type of home, so called, unassisted by architects.

The distinguishing traits are easy enough to know. The

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window-frames are broad and white, they lie flush with the walls, and small panes of glass twinkle in the sunshine. The gables are noted for their elaborate curves ; and mouldings and carvings, as in some ancient Roman brickwork, are cut by hand. A special kind of brick is used, called a rubber ; it is granular and soft, with an orange-red tint ; it wears well, and its chiselled lines are pliant, true, and clean. When this cut brickwork is contrasted with walls of grey flint, as in the neighbourhood of Margate, the effect is jolly indeed.

Londoners were particularly fond of the Queen Anne house, with its white-panelled rooms and its alert cosiness ; and in our own times, happily, it has been revived, as by Mr. Norman Shaw and the late J. J. Stevenson, one of its most successful devotees.*

3. *Tiled Houses*, as in Kent and Surrey, where tiles are found as wall-hangings as well as on roofs, so that a home appears to be dressed in a suit of armour weather-worn and mossy. Tiles are indeed delightful ; and I learn from a rare old book, Atkinson's *Cottage Architecture*, issued 1805, that much care used to be taken to dull the first raw colour of tiles, anticipating moss and golden fungi. Aggressive red tiles were sometimes tinted with quick lime, sharp sand and soot, mixed together. This produced a grey colour ; but the favourite hue was a brown not unlike that of a straw thatch a few years old. Sulphate of iron dissolved in water, and mixed with a small portion of lime and soot, made a brown tint, not at all unfriendly to weather-stains and other natural colouring agents. It is, I suppose, permissible thus to tone down any big plot of colour in architecture that glares out from a landscape and "hits you slap between the eyes," as the popular phrase runs.

4. *Thatched Styles*, once very common, but now forbidden in several parts of England. Atkinson fought for the English thatch in 1805, and to-day it has many professional champions ; there is, indeed, a revival of thatching, above all in Sussex, in Leicestershire, and in Norfolk. Perhaps the best material for thatching are Norfolk reeds, but on this matter something more will be said anon.

* See Mr. Stevenson's "House Architecture," published in 1880.

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5. *Stone Styles*, such as the ever-delightful Cotswold types of cottage and manor house. Their qualities are typically national: vigour with refinement, a quiet sentiment touched with romance, and a thorough steadfastness of purpose. The mediæval traits—mullions, transoms, dripstones, gables, and so forth—are not excessive. Mr. Dawber's book is a host to us in Cotswold houses.

But no sooner has a style been chosen, than another momentous question pops out upon you:

What business relations either unite architects and their clients, or breed dissensions?

It is always necessary that both sides should know what a contract means; and in business, only too often, an agreement means continual disagreement, just because one party signed it without giving it sufficient thought. Now, many house-owners have complained that disputes accompanied the building work, and I have noticed invariably that troubles arose from two causes:

(a) Extras: either for things not thought of before the contract was signed, or for things omitted by mistake from the contract.

(b) Clients failing to understand the plans which they approved. "Oh! we didn't expect this and that to come out in such inconvenient ways! How *very* stupid we've been, to be sure! But *why* didn't the architect warn us?" . . . and so forth.

Well now. Does anyone fall in love with extras? I don't mean theatrical extras, whose charm is adding gaiety to reference books on the Peerage. Those other extras mean indefinite costs, which irritate the most patient temper. If I were a practising architect, I should never suggest any new expense after the contract was signed; all suggestions of that sort would have to come from my clients; and even then I should receive them with caution, taking care to have each fresh item put into the contract, just as codicils are added to wills, and asking my client to keep well in mind the total sum of money involved in the supplementary charges.

Indefinite ideas, with vague recollections and shifty aims,

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ought to be absent when houses are built. Everything should be as clearly defined as the plans and elevations.

But, though clearly defined, an architect's designs are rarely understood by amateurs, though clients are ashamed to say so. Wives and husbands study the plans together ; and though they often quarrel a good deal, each believing that the other is wrong, neither husband nor wife has the least idea what the designs will be when enlarged full size into a real house. As well might they attempt to judge a great picture from a thumb-nail illustration. Yet they approve the plans at last and sign the contract ; and that is how and why disputes and disappointments arise.

What, then, is to be done ? In my book on "The English House and its Styles," I give an answer to that question, and it has been approved by experts. The useful and necessary thing is to study the plans not only in their full size, but on the spot, on the prospective site : and this may be done without much trouble if you ask your architect for help. He will gladly send one of his pupils. The plans having a scale of feet, it is easy to learn the size of each room, the width of each passage, the thickness of each wall, etc. ; and to show all this on the ground full-sized is not very much more difficult than to mark out a tennis court. You need a measure and plenty of narrow tape and long pins. With two lines of tape and a sprinkling of sawdust between them, the thickness of a wall can be clearly shown ; and every other detail of the plans can be copied correctly. This work done, you have only yourself to blame if you fail to understand the full value of the architect's arrangement ; for you can walk from room to room in the plan of each floor, and verify all essential points as often as you please. No time is ever lost by thoroughness. So let me set down the chief points that always need careful verification :—

(a) Will the outside walls keep out damp and cold. Some bricks "drink" their own weight of water.

(b) In what way are the inner walls to be constructed ? Will they be sufficiently sound-proof between bedrooms and between the kitchen and the dining-room ? There should be no doubt at all on this point. I am writing this in a house about

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seventy years old, and therefore built before the really bad days of jerry-building fell like a plague on English life and landscape. Yet conversations in an ordinary tone of voice are heard from room to room. See the chapter on walls.

(c) Give great attention to the floors. They should resist fire; and there are now many good types of floor made of armoured concrete and of combined concrete and steel; but sometimes narrow fillets of wood are laid over the concrete, and to them the floor-boards are nailed. This method is bad, for ventilation is necessary here; and fillets and boards are likely to decay from dry rot if they are not well aired. Several modern floor-coverings keep all ventilation from the wood under them, as in the case of Linoleum. Mr. Edwin T. Hall, an excellent authority, gives us another point. If, says he, wood fillets are nailed under a new concrete floor and a cement painted ceiling is attached, the wood is almost certain to be affected by dry rot. He adds: "To get over the difficulty regarding floors when these are intended to be covered, the surface of the concrete forming the upper or suspended floors may be trowelled with cement, and covered with linoleum (instead of boards). At once a furnished appearance is given to the floor, and rugs or carpets look well on it. The material is pleasant to tread upon, it is not so resonant as wood, and there are no joints in which vermin can find refuge." All this applies to upper floors, and not to concrete laid on the solid earth.

I have now mentioned three points concerning which there can be no doubt at all. So now we can pass on with confidence to another question:

The plans having been laid out in tape on the site, what other points should be verified first with care?

Windows come first. An old rule of the Classic Masters ordains that all windows on the same level must be not only of equal size but of equal distance apart, even although they give light to rooms that vary much both in size and in household use. But this rule is really too unbending; it leaves no scope for a reasonable picturesqueness; and our own Gothic genius obtained balance and proportion without help from such rule-

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and-compass regularity. Let us say, then, with our modern architects, that windows ought never to be scattered over the elevations, but should look well placed and in character, inevitably right ; and so we do not wish to see, *in positions having the same relative proportion*, a contrast between casements and sash windows, or between sash windows variously high and wide.

It is far from easy to design sash windows with charm, because their proportion is upright, vertical ; and soldierly lines must be rhythmical as well as tall, and have grace. If you examine in Bedford Square, London, the narrow tall windows designed by the brothers Adam, you will see how a rather dull type of Classic architecture is illumined into dignity.

An excellent authority, Mr. E. Guy Dawber, has good things to say about casements, the easiest and most elastic form of window, allowing great variety in bays, in oriels, and in plain forms, whether of stone or wood ; and you can stretch them out into long and low shapes, or you may couple them together and by means of transoms carry them up to any height you please. Casements, indeed, are very friendly to Gothic traditions in window design.

As to the size of windows, when walking through the taped-out plan on your site, you ask yourself :

Are they in scale with the outside walls ? That is, are the windows too large or too small ? or is there around them a sufficient framing of brickwork or stonework ?

Do not look upon this matter as trivial. There has been a craze for windows unduly large ; we forget that glass lets in cold and heat as well as light. When windows are too big, it is hard to keep a room comfortably warm in winter, for the glass remains cold, and against it all day long heated air gets chilled, then rushes back into the room as a continuous draught. That is why architects object to the very windows which their clients too often insist upon having. Why turn rooms into glass-houses, too hot in summer and too frigid in winter ? Enough light will come through openings moderately big. Peasants of Elizabeth's time said of Hardwick Hall that it was all window and no wall—a criticism to be avoided in the case of our own houses, surely.

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Think also of windows in their relation to doors and furniture. In architectural plans, *the main furniture ought always to be marked down*. For example, why should the door of a bedroom be in a corner? Because, when open, it should screen the bed from inquisitive eyes in the passage or corridor. As to the bed, it should be free from any draught, such as may pass between door and window or window and fireplace. Draughty ventilation is not profitable (except to doctors and chemists). Even the British public, so patient under grievances, so accustomed to "the pap of compromise," should insist upon having the best ventilation. It is useless to make much ado about open-air cures and open-air sleeping, if we accept draughts and colds instead of ventilation and health. Mr. E. T. Hall, taking the average height of a moderate-sized room as from ten to eleven feet, recommends that in towns the tops of windows should be reasonably near to the ceiling, partly for reflection of light, and partly to carry away vitiated air. But we must remember two things. Windows are not handsome when they rise to the level of a cornice; and the carbonic acid gas in vitiated air does not keep near the ceiling; it is by nature heavier than the atmosphere of a room, and rises only so long as it is warm; then down it comes into the zone of the air we breathe. The useful and essential thing is to have it carried away at once at the ceiling level in winter, and by open windows in summer.

Tobin tubes are said to be very useful, two for a sitting-room and one for a bedroom; but what can be better than air-flues built side by side with the smoke-flues? They are convenient and inexpensive; no chimney-stack should be without them. A smoke-flue keeps the air-flue hot, and thus ensures a constant draught up the air-flue. A grating near the cornice enters the bottom of the ventilating flue, and through it tobacco smoke and impure air are sucked from a room. As a protection against down draughts in a high wind, the grating has a silk flap, a noiseless convenience, unlike flaps of mica. The top of an air-flue should be two or three feet lower than the chimney pots, and have a grating on each side face, to guard your air-flue from the smoke which may be blown into it from chimneys hard by.

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Windows, then, need help in the ventilation of rooms. And now :

What other points concerning windows are worth remembering ?

They look best in the long walls, according to many good architects. That is a point for country-houses. In town architecture windows are usually at the end facing a street, and the ends are often narrower than the sides. The old-time liking for square rooms has grown weaker and weaker, for two reasons. In the first place, most modern houses are smaller than old houses of the same type (owing to increased costs for building and to the rising value of convenient sites) ; and in the second place long rooms seem larger than squares having the same area. That is why square rooms are not satisfactory in small houses. Narrow rooms, again, can be widened picturesquely (except in towns) by means of a bay-window or two at the side. Never place windows opposite each other, for that does away with privacy. In little bedrooms only one window should be put, because furniture needs much wall-space. But two windows are very useful in big bedrooms, one for the dressing-table, and another to be left open in all weather.

Inventors have not yet solved for us the problem of open windows in relation to wet days. There is still a panic indoors when rain begins to fall ; windows are closed at once against the wet. Yet rain-drenched air has a refreshing sweetness which every home ought to be able to welcome, without damage to curtains, etc. We need, too, another invention, in these rapid days of motor cars with their "moving sepulchre of dust." How to screen an open window from dust, without blocking out the fresh air, is a problem worth solving, particularly as the dust is charged with grit and germs, with particles of manure and other nasty things. Much remains to be done. Every window should have a rain-awning and a dust-screen. Why know the perils of dust, the benefits of fresh air, when our windows let in both at the same moment ?

Many persons seem to believe that a window should look like a void in a wall, an unguarded hole ; so they use large sheets of glass, fixed in woodwork so slender that it cannot be seen

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at a little distance. Twenty-nine years ago Mr. J. J. Stevenson protested against that bad custom, yet he spoke into deaf ears. Sash-bars ought always to be strong, clearly visible, so that in winter, when windows are shut, we may *see* that there is really some protection between us and the bitter winds outside. Everything in architecture should *look* fit for its purpose ; and so its construction should be shown emphatically, and not be hidden meanly from sight. And we find, too, that dangers often arise when this rule is infringed. Many persons have walked into glass doors, believing them to be open ; and children have injured themselves by putting their heads through window panes.

Children, indeed, have always to be considered in the planning of windows, particularly of windows for the upper storeys. In a nursery they should be barred outside, or put above the reach of a child standing on a chair or a table. On the ground floor parents may think of themselves, and enjoy that jolly holiday for tired eyes and minds which is given by an easy view through a window over shining green landscapes. The glass line should be not more than two feet nine inches from the floor, nor less, perhaps, than two feet six inches. In bedrooms the glass line may be three feet three inches from the floor. These distances are recommended by architects.

A final point—one of much importance—concerns windows, namely, prospect and aspect ; and it is well to start out with the question :

Is there a simple rule here to guide us to right decisions ?

Yes : it is this. Only one room in a house should be entirely free from sunlight—the larder. Some writers include the kitchen, but a kitchen is all the better after a visit from the mild radiance of the earliest sunshine ; and so an eastern aspect is good, as our ancestors found out in the case of their mediæval common halls. Bedrooms and bathrooms need the same aspect, or one towards the south-east ; and the sun should be with us at breakfast, too, of course. The best dayroom deserves two aspects, the south and the south-west ; the latter gives the afternoon sun, the author's sun, as Victor Hugo calls it, because it refreshes a writer's study without interfering with a long morning's work.

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Those delightful wee critics, the children, want the sun all day long, because that would keep them away from lessons on hot days ; but critics always ask for more than they have a right to expect. It seems best to give a nursery two windows, one towards the south-east, and the other looking south-west. Do you dine in the evening ? If so, a minor window to catch the sunset glow is pleasant ; yet it may be troublesome also, as the level sun on a summer evening is at times so brilliant in a room that it worries the carver, who pulls down the blind with a tug. Again, as enfiling sunlight is bad in a room during meals, do not choose west or north-west for your principal window. From south to south-east is the aspect for dining-rooms, because it gives at midday a sunlight from high up, which is not at all inconvenient, while in the evening, at dinner, views outside are lighted up from behind. Oh, but—! Some one reminds me at this point that housewives at times believe that curtains and carpets are more important than sun-rays, even in England ; and it is said that some dayrooms have been built facing north-east, so as never to see the charitable sun. Pride of home is a dull hermit now and again.

In your taped-out plans all the fireplace openings are clearly shown, and they suggest other useful questions :

Are they too deep? And is it ever right to build chimneys on outside walls ?

There are women with very decided opinions on these points, and their criticisms should afflict certain architects with burning ears. Only last night I had the privilege of listening to several fair critics who defended chimneys and fireplaces against architects in general, and against certain named men of note in particular. "It took me a whole afternoon to see the house," said one lady, "and Mr. A. was lucky not to have *me* for his client. Such fireplaces ! *Deep*, you know. Heat could not possibly get into the rooms. And the owner told me that she shivered like anything all winter through. A gentle old maid with a meek face, you see, and so afraid to keep her architect in order. But she suffers—oh, she suffers for it now ! For the chimneys are on external walls, wasting their heat on the air

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outside. What in the world would architects do, if there were no women to hustle them into reason, into common sense ? ”

It was pleasant for me to get such good, vivid copy. The architect, thus severely criticised, is known for two things : infinite care in details, and sound workmanship in every part. For once, he may be at fault ; but the real worth of a fireplace to a tenant depends partly on matters other than architectural skill. Some persons are never warm in winter, for example ; and many either cannot or will not afford enough coal to heat rooms which are properly ventilated. These personal considerations affect an architect's designs, just as temperamental factors influence a doctor's treatment. It is unfair to hide necessary facts from any adviser. There is nothing wrong in deep fireplaces if the grates are modern and of the best kind, and if you can afford to burn a sufficient amount of coal. Ingle-nooks are delightful ; and in rooms of a large size there ought to be two fireplaces, because one fireplace draws a household and its friends to one part of a room, a thing at odds with private talk and with friendship in groups.

As to the chimneys and their position, they have a marked effect on the beauty of a house. Economy says that they ought to be few, and art agrees. Tall, massive chimneys, in positions which are well balanced, are the most attractive, as in the delightful work of Mr. Norman Shaw, who has a great sympathy for Tudor and Elizabethan mastery in the treatment of chimney-stacks. As to the criticism concerning outside walls, no great architect has feared to put chimneys there when he felt a necessity for that arrangement. But great architects are employed to do the best work, often regardless of expense ; their external walls are too thick and solid to allow heat from the fire to penetrate through them ; and when external walls do not allow cold to enter nor heat to escape, rooms are comfortable in winter. Mr. J. J. Stevenson recommended chimneys on inside walls for ordinary homes ; and amongst these may be counted most houses which are built to be let, because in them there is much economy in the use of building materials, even when jerry-builders do not show their ravaging thrift.

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Thus, then, the positions of your chimneys depend on practical considerations. If some of them are to be on outside walls, spend money enough on those walls: do not make a blunder which seems to belong to would-be house-owners, who usually wish to get a guinea's worth for seventeen shillings or less, like that friend of Thackeray's who knew where *cheap* old wine could be bought.

This yearning to get much for little gives a huddled character to the plans of most builders' houses. Suburban villas are nothing more than large houses in pocket editions, with a cramped entrance hall, too many small bedrooms and those three "reception rooms" which look great in advertisements, and tiny and mean to their rentpayers. This matter deserves thought when your plans are laid out with tape on your chosen site. For example:—

Are there too many dayrooms? Is the hall large enough?

That historic room, the hall, after a period of unpopularity, has begun to hark back to its fine ancient title, *the house-place*, good to live in and pleasant for meals; and certainly a good, spacious hall is infinitely better for any middle-class family than the same amount of space divided by thin walls into a drawing-room and two parlours. This triple arrangement—three deception rooms—makes life wretched in a great many flats and little homes. Besides that, human characters are warped by diminutive planning, by a want of spaciousness in rooms. Children feel ill at ease, like oak saplings planted in small flower-pots; and when they grow up they have those narrow hesitating gestures and movements which look absurd in Shakesperian acting. It takes years of practice before Englishmen and women are able to get with ease and distinction the breadth of style necessary in the playing of Shakespeare's dramas. What a commentary is that on modern rooms and their life! The greatest times in English history were those in which vast halls were the main centres of family life; and there has been a marked decline of national vigour since our rooms not only ceased to grow, but shrank away from the sizes in vogue during Georgian and Regency times.

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I am writing this in a Regency house, and my study is in an attic measuring 16 feet 6 inches by 12 feet 2½ inches. One can move at ease, and work a good twelve hours a day, happy and fresh all the time. Cottages built for labourers in 1805 had on the ground floor a kitchen with a pantry and a dairy; the kitchen was sixteen feet by fourteen, and the walls were more than twelve inches thick.

Now facts like these are worth much thought, now that you have your own house-plans to criticise. Is not a homely, spacious hall worth two small dayrooms? and what more is necessary? A hobby-room, let us say, part library, part boudoir, where letters may be written, and books read, and silence enjoyed.

May the same principle be applied to bedrooms?

Why not? Is there any reason why two brothers or two sisters should have each a small bedroom, instead of sharing a large one? Surely the aims of modern planning should be comfort, space, health, and lessened work for servants? Flat-dwellers will not haggle over that question, for they know at its worst the present bad system of little bedrooms and three small deception-rooms.

But if you decide to have a cheerful, large hall, what particular points or qualities ought to be aimed at?

Good architects give different answers, and all are right. Mr. E. T. Hall draws attention to one set of helpful ideas and particularly to those geometrical shapes which Frenchmen like and manage with admirable skill. Octagon halls and round halls are excellent features in many French houses and flats. It is always useful to have a vestibule, and your hall should not be a passageway to the front door.

Mr. Arnold Mitchell points out the value of a good first impression, good enough to be better on better acquaintance; and he asks us to note those plans in which the hall offers welcome surprises, such as may be found, for example, in the Shropshire house by Ernest George and Yeats (page 82), where the approach to the Great Hall through the Entrance Hall is elusive and charming. For the lesser hall seems to be the main one; it satisfies all expectations; and yet, beyond it, awaiting visitors

OUR HOMES

as a pleasure unforeseen, is a nobler hall by far, with a range of fine windows showing the garden. Mr. R. S. Lorimer, in his jolly little cottage for Major Meares (page 83), is equally unexpected in another fortunate way, for if we go from the vestibule into the corridor, we come suddenly on one side to a corner, around which, recessed, the stairs are put; and on the other side, as soon as we turn the corridor, we find a good bay, deep and square, and therefore very attractive in a small house. Such planning is noble and full of charm.

Privacy being essential in dayrooms, a hall, as I have said, should not be a passageway between the front door and the servants' quarters. This problem is not an easy one to solve, but in several plans illustrated here, as in *Little Thakeham*, by Mr. Lutyens, and *A House at Wokingham*, by Mr. Ernest Newton, there is a private passage to the front door—a useful hint.

Again, Mr. Arnold Mitchell says:

“The Entrance Hall, in even the smallest house, has possibilities of design which no other part of a home possesses. Not only is it the means of communication between the chief rooms; it either contains the principal staircase or leads to it; and in that staircase an architect often finds his lending motif for a good effect of house architecture.”

Be sure, then, that you cannot give too much thought to your staircase, even now, in these days of noisy lifts; and many hints may be got from plans in this book.

Long ago halls had music galleries and elaborate screens, and ideas have been borrowed from those noble old features. In one of Mr. Mitchell's houses, *Great Stanmore*, the hall has a gallery across one end, with an ingle-nooked fireplace under it, a bonnie drawing-room that opens into it, and a short, double flight of stairs going down into the hall. The rest of the staircase ascends on the other side of the house. On leaving the drawing-room for dinner, we enter the gallery, cross it, go down the steps and walk the full length of the hall to the dining-room, so that we see by the way a fine room under different aspects, from above and from the hall floor.

It is now time to pass on to another point of interest, namely:

HOUSEHOLDERS AND THE HOUSE PLAN

How are the servants to be treated? Do your plans give a satisfactory reply?

If not, the plans should be refused at once. The trouble here is to keep servants in their own part of a home without seeming to treat them negligently or harshly as inferiors. For human feelings are pretty much the same among all servant workers, from queens to "tweenies," and slights, very easy to give, are very hard to forget. No house servant should be treated with that historic want of tact which is shown to players in the comfortable dressing-rooms of theatres. Yet that want of tact may be found in a multitude of houses and flats. Let the kitchen be airy and as large as possible; and, in your small house, let a pantry separate the kitchen from the family room, so as to act as barrier against the smells of cooking. A serving-door should connect a kitchen and pantry with the dining-room. A good bedroom is necessary for the maid, of course, however small the house; and a servants' hall, too, in any home of a large size. A bathroom? Well, some recent cottages have a long bath fixed in the scullery and covered with a good oak lid, forming by day a table for plates and dishes. But a great deal of unnecessary ado is made about fixed baths "with water hot and cold," as advertisements say. A hand-bath by a good fire is not such a bad thing, after all; it is better, undoubtedly, than a bathroom too small for a fireplace, and having not even a heated towel-rail to warm it during winter months.

Such bathrooms, always friendly to influenza, are common, though hot-water cisterns ought to be put there, snugly housed in large airing cupboards for linen. You, of course, will have a proper bathroom, sunned, airy, light, and warm; but have you noticed that a whole family wants to bathe at the same hour precisely, which gives rise to a daily game of hide-and-seek in dressing-gowns and pyjamas? Do we not need a bath in each bedroom, with hot and cold water?

We have now considered all introductory points in the art of planning, but—

Are there any rules to sum up difficulties and aims?

Here are four.

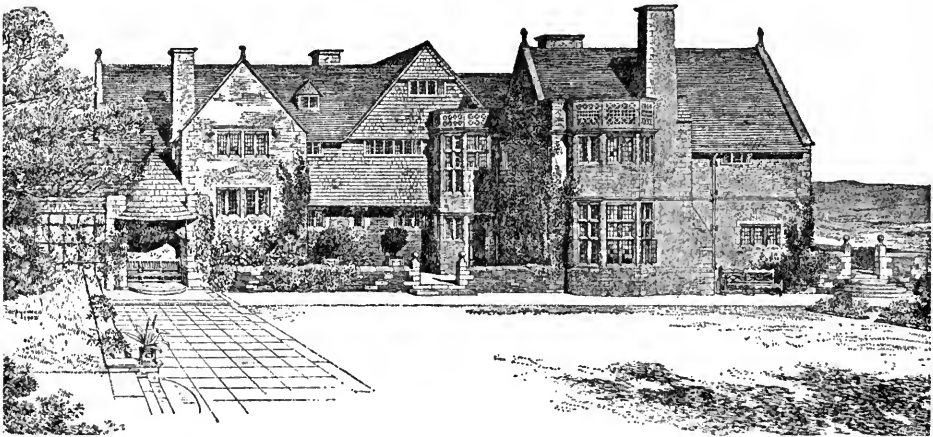
OUR HOMES

One trait of modern planning is multifariousness, but keep it for large houses with many servants. Kings during the Middle Ages were content with a few rooms ; and now that royal economy is forced upon most of us by increased work for diminishing pay or profit.

Another characteristic is complete isolation for the several parts of a home. But this may be carried much too far, as when the small amount of space in a flat is frittered away on passages. Communicating doors between rooms, common to-day in France, are not always bad.

Comfort and convenience sum up all the other necessities of good planning : not an ideal sort of comfort, but practical comfort, in strict accord with each family's income and real needs. As to imagined or fanciful wants, they are like that ambition which cannot mount a horse, preferring to leap over the saddle.

In brief, successful home-making is the art of doing well not more than we can afford to do.

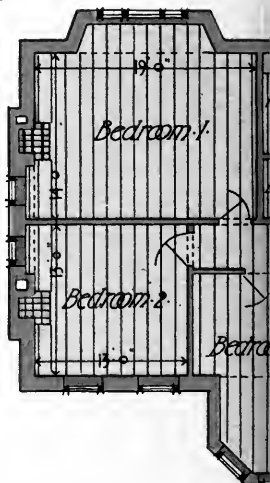
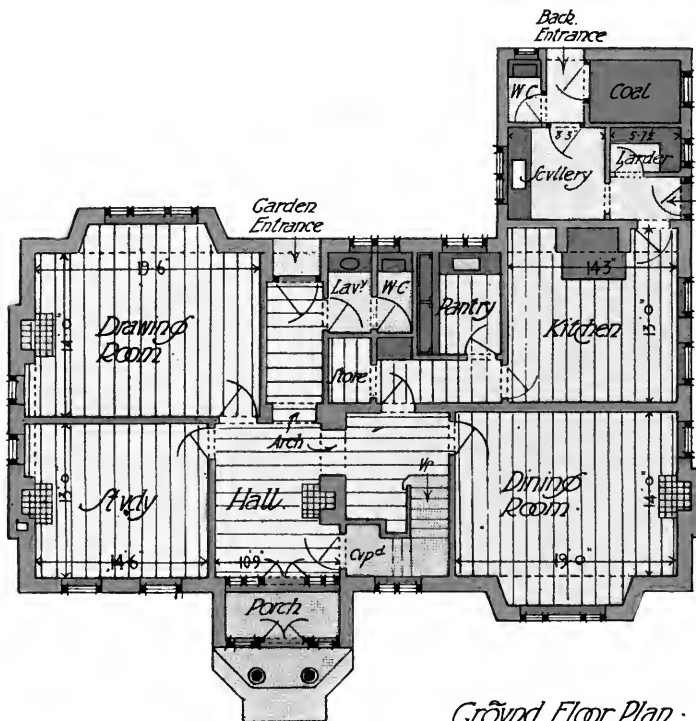


NETHER SWELL MANOR IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE, THE SEAT OF SIR JOHN MURRAY SCOTT, BART. IT IS BUILT OF LOCAL STONE WITH STONE MULLIONED WINDOWS, THE ROOFING OF STONE SLATES

E. Guy Dawber, Architect, London



Entrance Front.



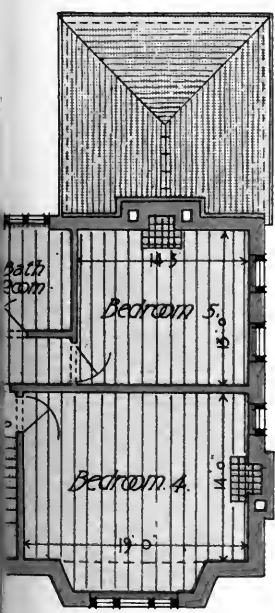
Ground Floor Plan.

Winton Newman del.

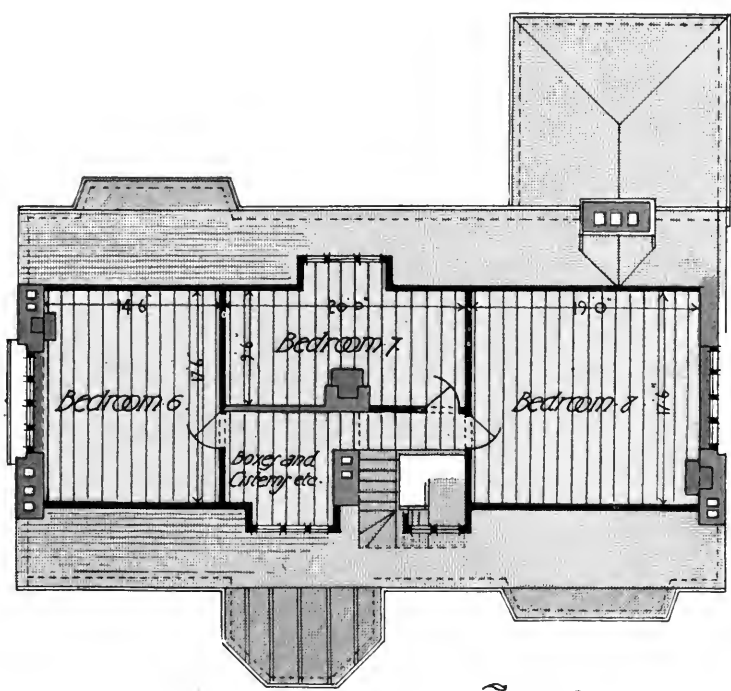
et
 20 30 40



Garden Front



First Floor Plan



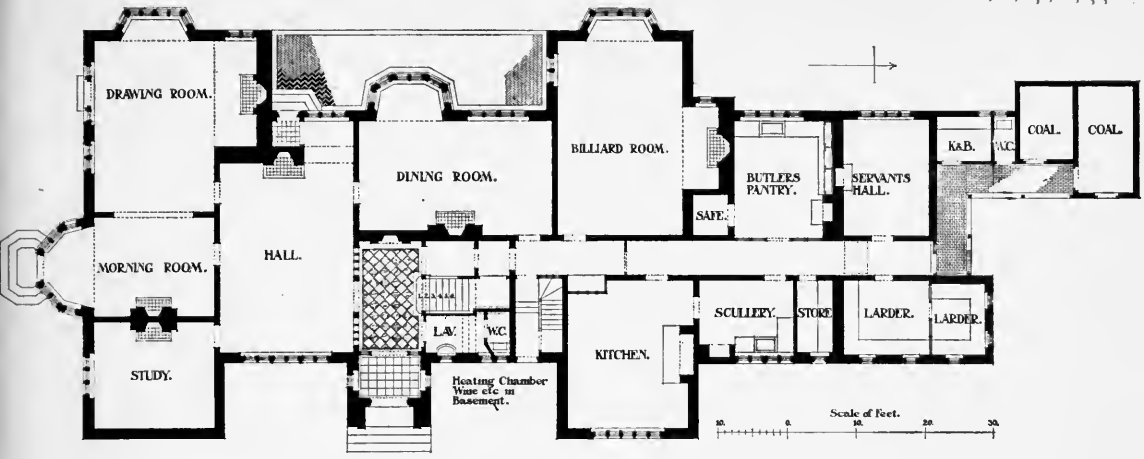
Attic Plan

*Ernest Newton, Archt
 & Raymond Buildings
 Gray Inn WC*

MATERIALS: ROUGHCASTED BRICK, RED TILES, GREEN WOODWORK

Architect, London

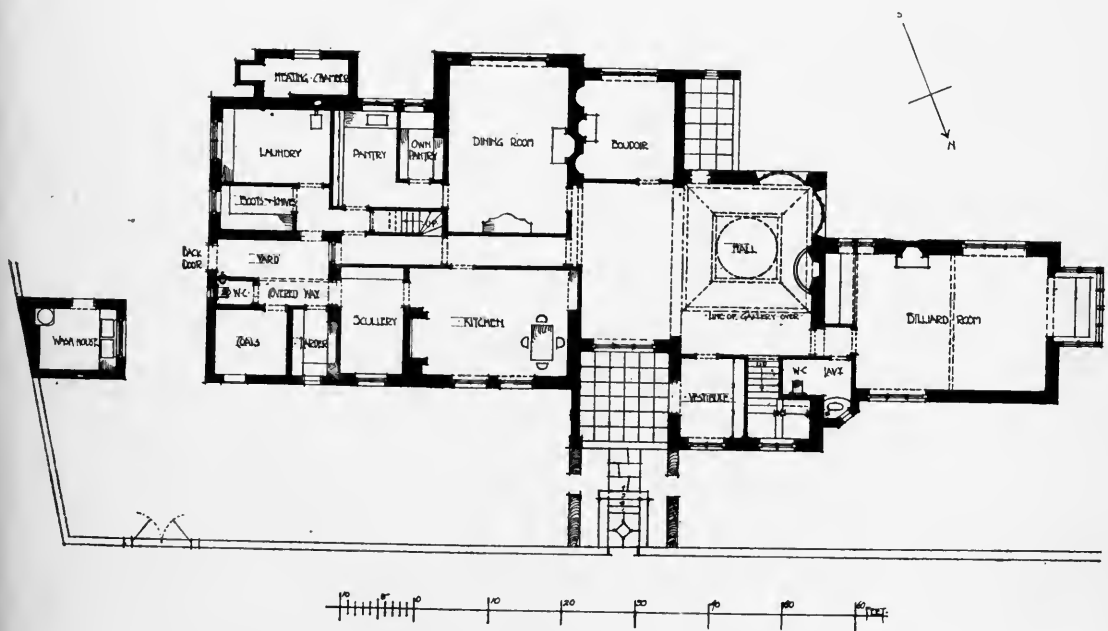
PLANNING



GROUND PLAN.

GROUND PLAN OF A HOUSE AT WOKINGHAM. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF B. T. BATSFORD, LONDON. FOR THE ILLUSTRATION OF THIS HOUSE SEE THE FRONTISPIECE

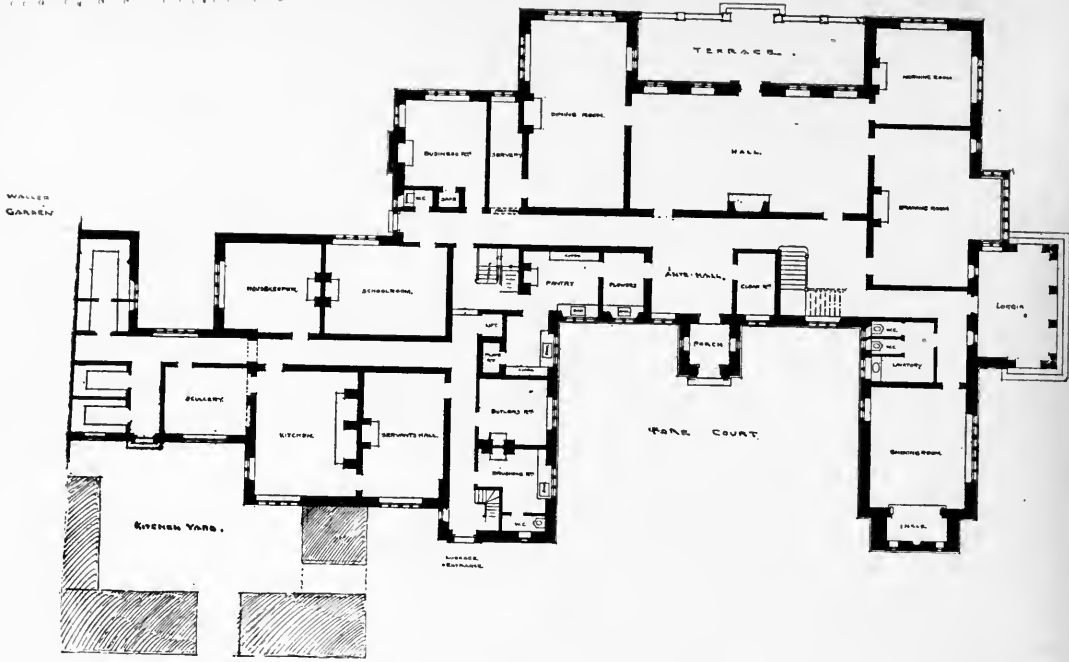
Ernest Newton, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



PLAN OF MR. C. E. TODD'S HOUSE AT ST. ANDREWS

R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Architect, Edinburgh

PLANNING

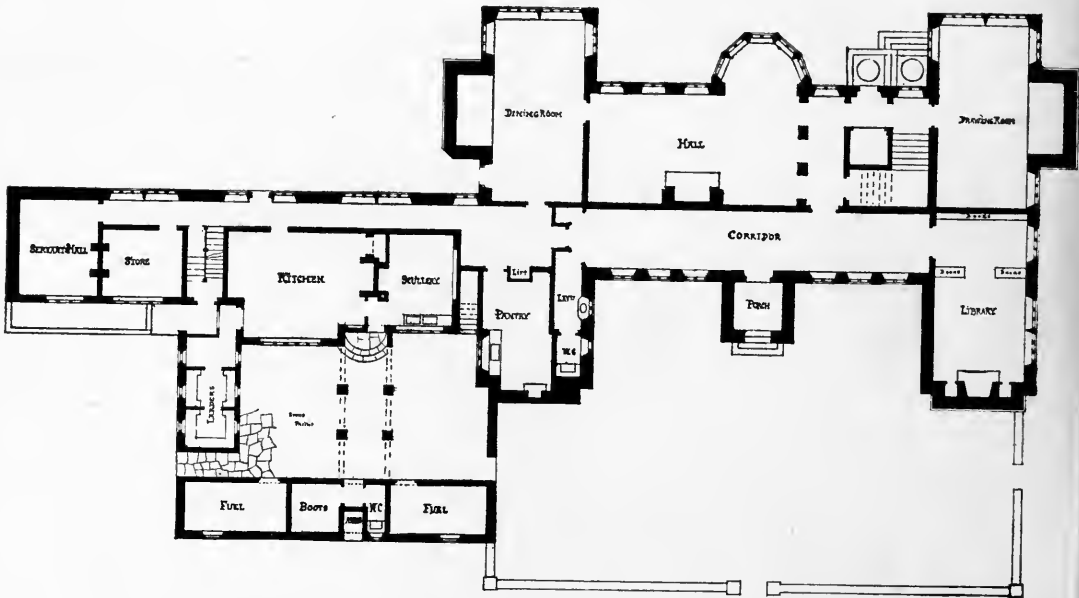


A HOUSE IN SHROPSHIRE

PLAN OF THE GROUND FLOOR

SEE REFERENCE IN THE TEXT

Ernest George and Yeates, Architects, London

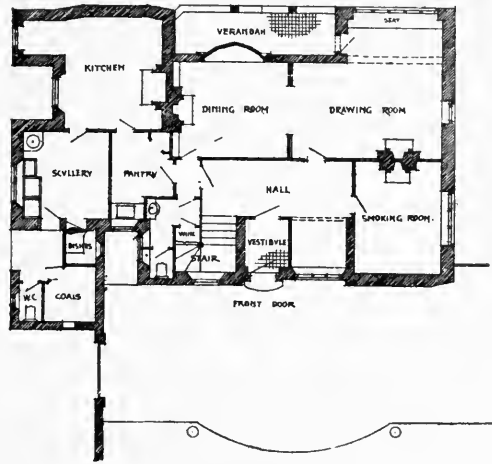
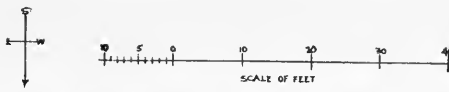


GROUND PLAN OF A COUNTRY HOUSE

LITTLE THAKEHAM, PULLBOROUGH, SUSSEX

E. L. Lutyens, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

PLANNING



MAJOR MEARES' COTTAGE, GROUND FLOOR PLAN
SEE REFERENCE IN THE TEXT



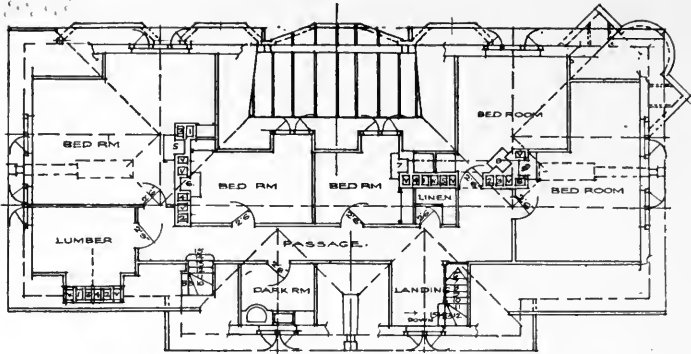
J. J. Jeon Del.

MAJOR MEARES' COTTAGE AT COLINTON

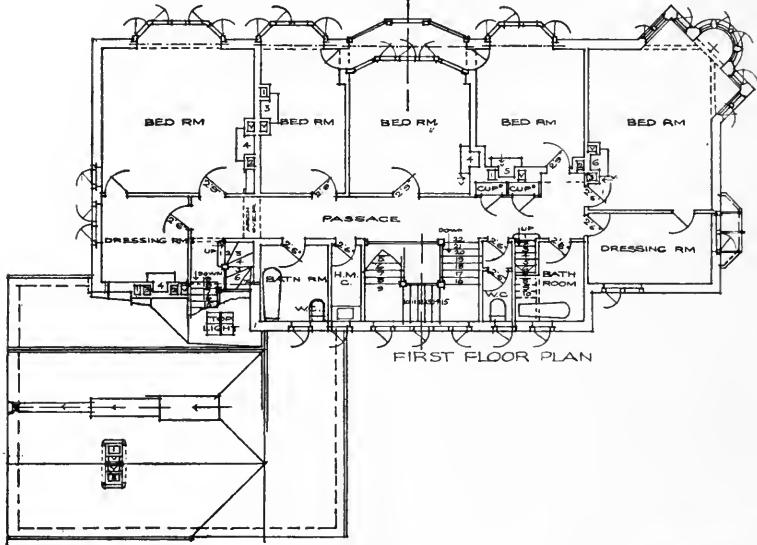
MATERIALS: STONE WALLS AND ROUGH-CAST, TILE ROOFS

R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Architect, Edinburgh

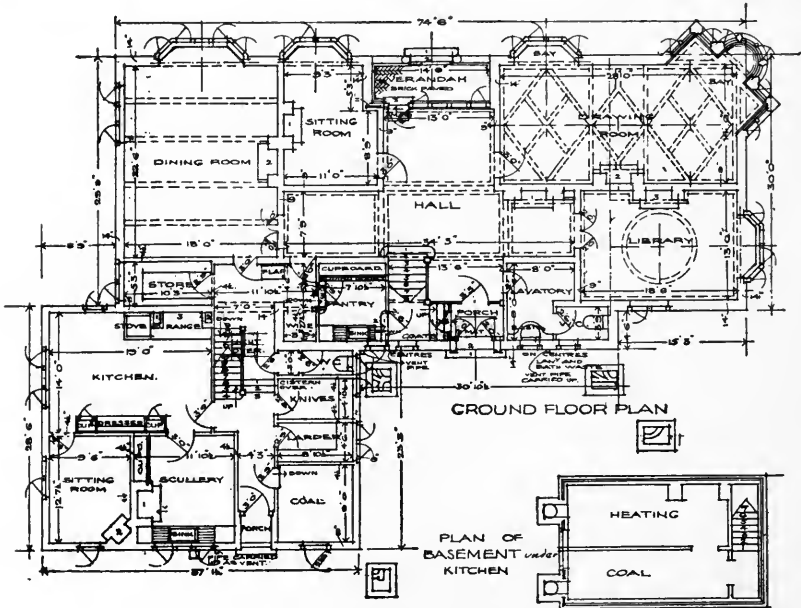
PLANNING



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

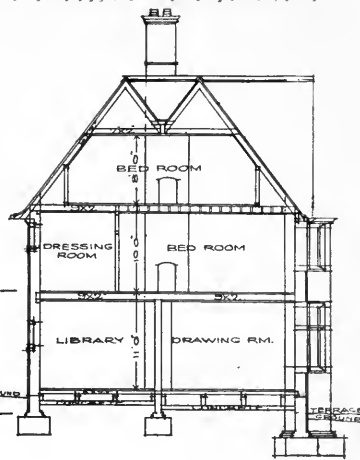
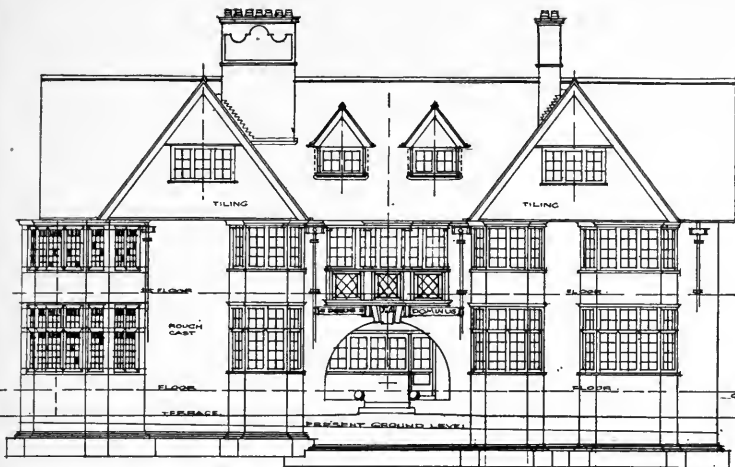


GROUND FLOOR PLAN

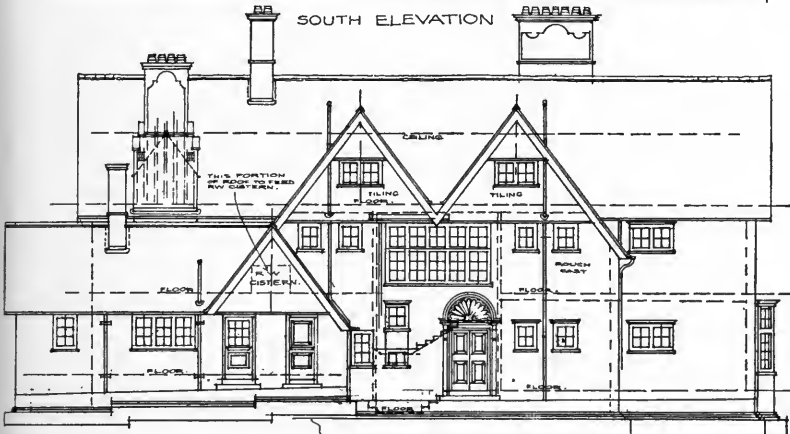
PLAN OF BASEMENT under KITCHEN

HOUSE AT HARROW WEALD. STUDY THE ELEVATIONS ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE

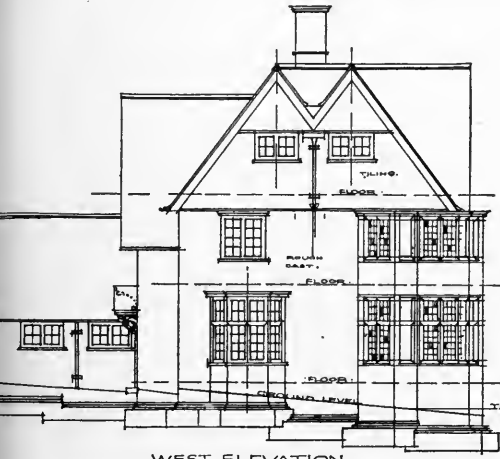
Arnold Mitchell, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



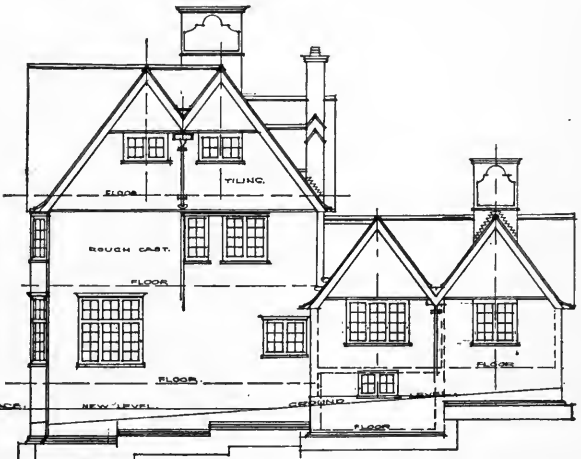
SOUTH ELEVATION



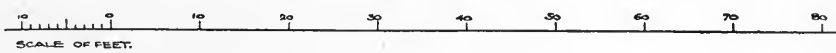
NORTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

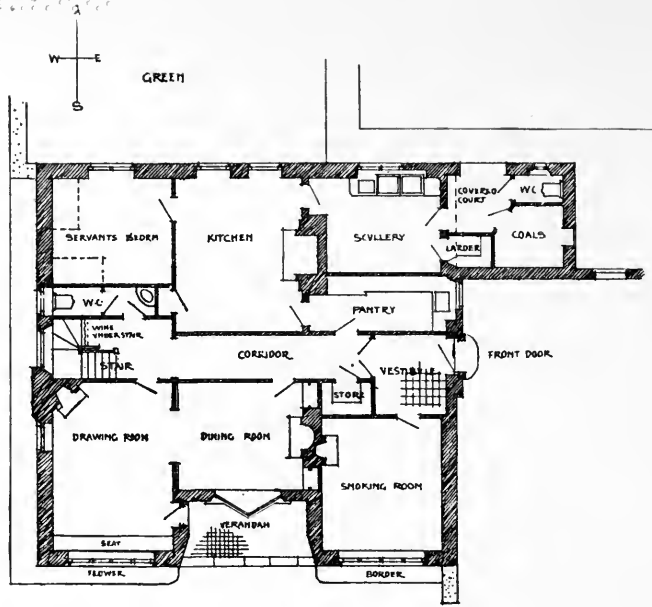


ARNOLD MITCHELL
 F.R.I.B.A. ARCHITECT
 17 MANOVER SQ. W.
 OCTOBER 1905.

HOUSE AT HARROW WEALD. ROOFING OF DARK TILES, BRIGHT RED WALL-TILES, THE WALLS WHITE BELOW

Arnold Mitchell, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

PLANNING



LORD PEARSON'S COTTAGE, PLAN OF THE GROUND FLOOR, SHOWING THE PANTRY AS A KIND OF LITTLE BUFFER STATE BETWEEN KITCHEN AND DWELLING-ROOMS

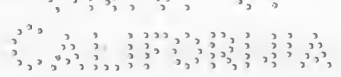
R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Architect



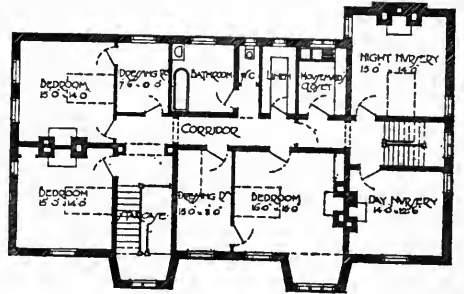
THE HON. LORD PEARSON'S COTTAGE AT COLINTON. MATERIALS: STONE WALLS AND ROUGH-CAST, WITH TILED ROOF

R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Architect, Edinburgh

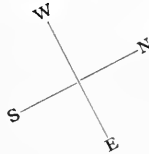
PLANNING



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



PLANS OF A HOUSE AT FULFORD

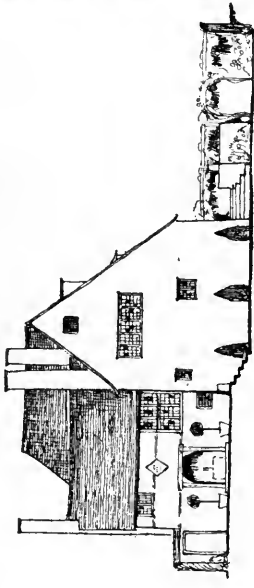
SEE THE ILLUSTRATION BELOW



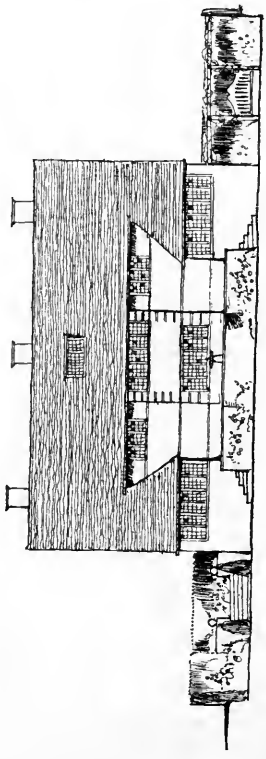
HOUSE AT FULFORD, YORKSHIRE, FOR C. A. COOPER, ESQ. THE WALLS ARE BUILT OF RED HAND-MADE LOCAL BRICKS, THE ROOFS ARE COVERED WITH THICK SILVER-GREY WESTMORELAND SLATES, THE PORCH IS OF OAK, THE REST OF THE WOODWORK IS PAINTED WHITE

Walter H. Brierley, F.S.A., Architect, York

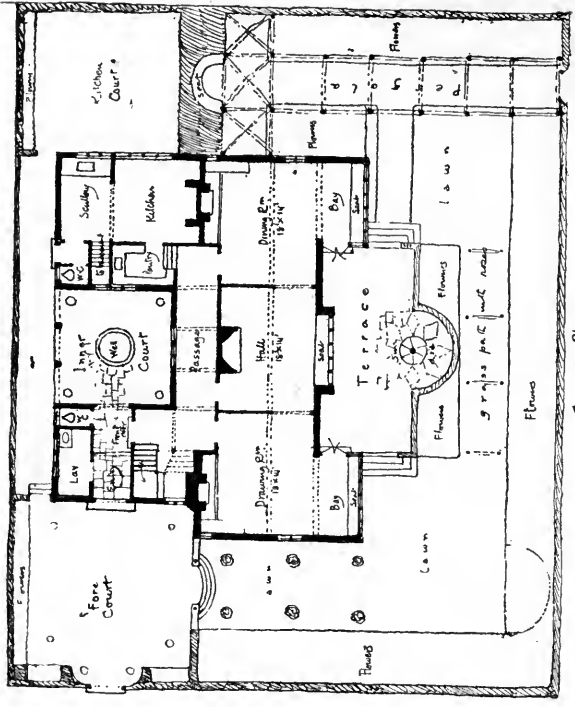
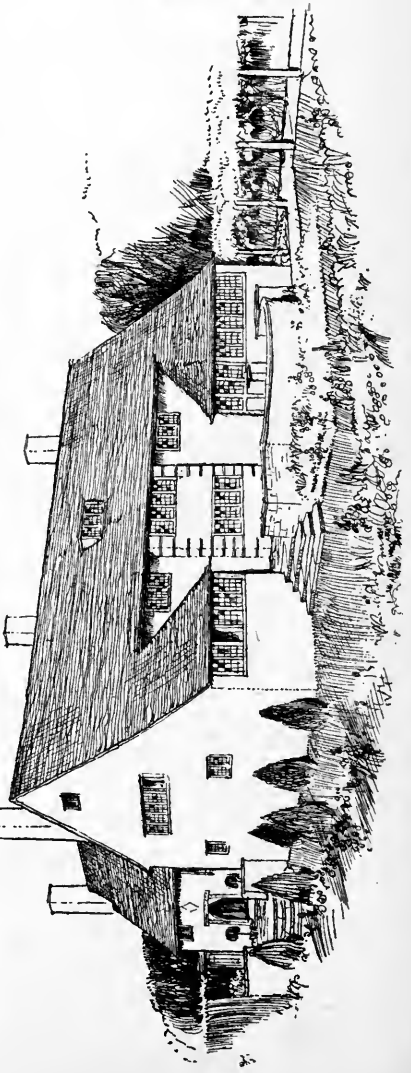
PLANNING



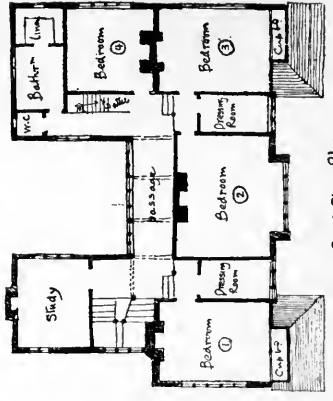
West Elevation



South Elevation



Ground Plan



First-Floor Plan

COUNTRY HOUSE AT HURLINGHAM, ESTIMATED COST £1600. MATERIALS: BRICK WALLS COVERED WITH ROUGHCAST AND ROOFS OF FINE RED TILES

CHAPTER THREE

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

To-day, unluckily, architects have a hard fight against imperfect materials, which are not, as a rule, so good as the implements of other modern artists. Painters find ready to their hands excellent brushes, canvases and pigments ; writers have more reference books and more fine local colours than they can employ with ease ; musicians have well-made instruments ; and composers, like singers, are not at war with bad orchestras. It is not till we come to the household arts that we find conditions which are strongly at odds with the counterbalancing spirit of thorough craftsmanship. Both science and trade have here too much power, reigning supreme over a domain in which they should never have been more than equal sovereigns with the national genius in art. It is forgotten that the soul of progress in the home is not science nor trade, but a beauty that transforms both. For art is the maker and recorder of civilisations. She has been all that since her first domestic invention, the craft of pottery, came from the Mother Earth.

Until we manage to equalise the triple rule of science, trade and art, the national character will be like an unfortunate athlete, condemned to stand always at scratch and to give twenty-five yards in a hundred to the sprint-runners of professional speculation. Architects feel this more, I think, than do any other

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craftsmen, because their art is more costly than any other ; it tempts many of its supporters to make rash economies in order to cut down necessary expenses. That is why the markets overflow with imperfect, inartistic materials : with roofing tiles all precisely the same, hard in shape, bad in colour, without texture and without individuality ; with slates having no varied tints, no mottled, broken hues ; and there are other kinds of sterile abundance.

It is hard to produce fine architecture under such conditions. We need urgently a general sympathy for the art of building, and architects and clients must know precisely what they want and what they can get with success for a given sum of money.

Let us remember also, in this connection, that the greatest authority on the history of English prices, the late Thorold Rogers, arrived at the conclusion that the cost of building had increased threefold since the Middle Ages, although the wages of skilled workmen were slightly higher in mediæval times, when considered in relation to the prices of food and lodging. We owe the increase to a complete difference of building methods. There were then no great contractors to be kept ; and difficulties of cartage prevented the coming of a manufacturing system for bricks, tiles, grates, window-frames, and the like. Agents and Middlemen did not exist, happily ; and craftsmen were engaged by the week or by the month to do all necessary forms of work on the site itself. If the paymaster had not on his estate a quarry, he rented one for a given number of weeks ; if his own trees were defective he bought others from a neighbouring manor, then his own servants cut them down and carried them to the building site. All the metals were purchased in the rough, to be distributed by weight to expert craftsmen, who fashioned them into household things *on the spot* ; and their finished work was always weighed by the employer.

Some of these old-time methods might be revived in country districts, not without much good arising. Meanwhile, however, architects do their best, though clients often forget present-day costs of production.

This said, we get into close touch with the subject of Homes

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

from Outside. It is a very complex subject, seeing that our own styles of architecture are all inherited, at least in their main principles. The warp and woof of traditions are apparent everywhere ; and in order that intricate matters may become simple and clear, let us divide our present theme into sections or parts, so as to form three chapters. Here are the points to be dealt with now :

- (a) Some historic considerations useful to ourselves.
- (b) The garden ; and then the foundation.

Afterwards, in another chapter, the roof will be studied, and followed by walls and windows.

Historic Considerations.

Bacon says that " houses are built to live in, and not to look on ; therefore let *use* be preferred before *uniformity*, except when both may be had."

It is odd that this warning should come to us from Elizabeth's reign, when there was a rage for thorough domestic architecture, and when a quite marvellous unity—not uniformity, please note—often existed between the component parts of a home, the house and its garden, the indoor furniture, and even the dresses worn by families and their servants. All was in keeping, as painters say.

But Bacon, who looked beyond his own time, saw one thing in the spirit of the Renaissance that threatened mischief ; a thing altogether opposed to English usages and traditions. It sprang from the revival of Italian Classic architecture, and brought into English houses a pompous symmetry of treatment, ousting the sentiment of country from country homes, as in such terribly grandiose work as that which Kent carried out in 1730 at Holkham, in Norfolk, or Sir John Vanbrugh (with some aid from Hawksmoor), at Blenheim, Oxfordshire, in 1715. The owner of Holkham said : " It is a melancholy thing to stand alone in one's own country-side ;" and, indeed, what could reconcile any sane man to a home of vast loneliness and discomfort ? Blenheim, too, another Palladian structure, is immensely uniform and un-English. It seems to have been put up for all the ghosts of the Imperial Cæsars. Ghosts are supposed never to be hungry,

OUR HOMES

and so, at Blenheim, the kitchen and dining-room are very far apart. When Vanbrugh died, his heroic misdeeds were remembered by Alexander Pope, who in a couplet said :

“Lie heavy on him, Earth ! for he
Laid many a heavy load on thee.”

Vast uniformity and pomp : that is what Bacon hated, but his criticism was forgotten, as we have seen. Indeed, some authorities go so far as to say, with Fergusson, that vainglory in architecture became the bane of art for three hundred years. But to say that is to overstate the case. Some beautiful and modest places were built in the Italian style during the most formidable time of the Classic revival, in the first half of the eighteenth century ; and we learn from country cottages and manor houses that the earlier traditions, as English as our English counties, were never entirely lost, but had friends and protectors among those who kept in touch with the fields. For we owe more genuine household art to peasant builders and craftsmen than to the great architects who lived between the era of Christopher Wren and that of our own first leaders in domestic building, Mr. Norman Shaw, Mr. Eden Nesfield, and Mr. Philip Webb.

It was between the years 1864 and 1894 that British houses, here and there, became British homes again, recovering that serene dignity and reticence of style which blends with a feeling for romance, a romance not without quaintness. Nothing is more characteristic of a race than its folk-songs, its popular old ballads ; and in English house architecture at its best you will find a charm equal and similar to that which has gathered about the name of Robin Hood, showing a delight in quaint sentiment as well as in bold action, in energy.

What may be called the ballad note of style was in the minds of those architects who at the end of the eighteenth century turned away from the frozen-up Classic formulas and tried to hark back to the happy genius of mediæval Gothic, with its tall, ascending lines, its pointed windows, and its picturesque gables irregularly grouped. They missed their way, unluckily, choosing the wrong type of Gothic, too early to be adapted with success to the needs of a life which was not mediæval. Even Ruskin

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

at a much later date went beyond the true period of Gothic in domestic work, fixing his attention on the thirteenth century, instead of learning by heart the traditions out of which Tudor and Elizabethan houses sprang. The art of the fifteenth century was considered to be debased Gothic, and Ruskin and others used to sneer at it, forgetting that when the great ages of church-building passed away, the fortunes of Gothic were decided by household wants and customs, till at last little else except homes were built, because there were enough churches, and even the oldest required only occasional repairs. Tudor, and the parent style that preceded Tudor, the so-called Perpendicular Gothic, developed mainly by domestic work, are, of course, invaluable to us all. Yet they were not only neglected by a great many students of the nineteenth century, but much Perpendicular work was destroyed, above all by country parsons.

Then a reaction came, and its spirit was militant. It attacked abuses, and challenged opposition, and put a trumpet note into many books, rallying the timid. Here are two volumes by J. J. Stevenson, and we read in them how the Perpendicular Style, by its common sense and severity, saved England's final period of Gothic from looseness and degradation, such as weakened the Gothic arts of France during the same century. *Common sense and severity*, please note ; it was those qualities that gave England a permanent form of domestic Gothic not to be found elsewhere ; a form that will always lend itself to intelligent adaptation. That is why it has influenced many living architects, either directly or indirectly, for some of our historic old types of house are much nearer than others to the domestic mediævalism of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Thus, for example, the buildings of Oolite stone, as in Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, and on the confines of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, are evidently akin to the sweet low level lines of Tudor houses, while our mixed style of the Renaissance, known as Queen Anne, shows us a Gothic strain crossed by a free love for Classical details.

We have now come to the main influences which have affected our own homes. Gothic survives, and Classic survives, but both

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have been tempered by common sense, *plus* a discreet sympathy for romance, the ballad note of style. In order that these points may be gripped firmly, let me give here two quotations, one written by Mr. W. H. Bidlake, M.A., a living architect, and the other by the late J. J. Stevenson.

Mr. Stevenson comes first. He speaks of the best Tudor and Elizabethan homes :

“ In the grandeur of their disposition and of their apartments, in the richness of their decoration, carried out consistently into the smallest details of fitting and furniture, in their harmony with the scenery, and above all, in their pleasant homely character, they surpass anything we can attempt or almost hope for, notwithstanding all our boasted superiority. In Elizabeth’s time . . . a house, however large, was made one by connecting all the parts together by means of corridors or galleries, which were often its main architectural features—wide and stately, lighted along the sides by stained glass windows. And another feature . . . was the great open staircase with carved oak banisters.”

We are thrown back in thought to the sixteenth century, which is perennial in many ways ; for thence, directly and indirectly, came living ideas into the hurly-burly of jerry-building which defamed the greatness of Victoria’s reign. Mr. W. H. Bidlake, having attributed to Mr. Norman Shaw the modern revival of English domestic architecture, says :

“ Naturally Mr. Shaw’s earlier houses, like that at Craigside, erected for Sir William Armstrong, have strong Gothic affinities ; but Mr. Shaw was not slow to perceive that the brick Renaissance houses of the 18th century—houses in the Queen Anne style, so called—more nearly answered the requirements of the present day ; and it is by the revival, or more correctly the adaptation and development of this style, and its application to the town house and the small country house, as well as to the country mansion, that Mr. Shaw has rendered such inestimable service to the advance of domestic architecture.”

But there are other matters to which detailed attention must be given here, beginning with—The Garden.

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

House and Garden belong to each other ; they should arise from the same definite plan, the same practical inspiration. But it happens that this truth has two foes. Households often claim the garden for their own province of art, and architects are becoming more and more estranged from outdoor work. They dwell in towns and toil in offices, unlike the great old Master Builders, who were always on the spot, face to face with the daily conflict which art had to fight against weather, wind, and site. Long ago, in the fifteenth century, an architect was engaged for a single job and paid by the year ; and certain rules were imposed upon him, including a fine if he lost more than three days' work in a quarter of a year, not that he was ever too busy, for his helpers were all craftsmen of ability who made their own full-sized drawings, and needed only that watchful discipline that correlated their efforts and made them harmonious within the limits of a general scheme. To-day, on the other hand, an architect in large practice has a hard life indeed. Not only is he a nurse to workmen, who can do nothing well unless he makes for them a full-sized drawing of each detail, but he knows that contractors lower their estimates without the least intention of decreasing their profits ; hence the quality of their work has to be tested with the greatest care. And that is not all. An architect may have in hand at the same time a dozen important jobs, not near together but in different parts of the country, so he has long railway journeys to interfere with concentrated thought.

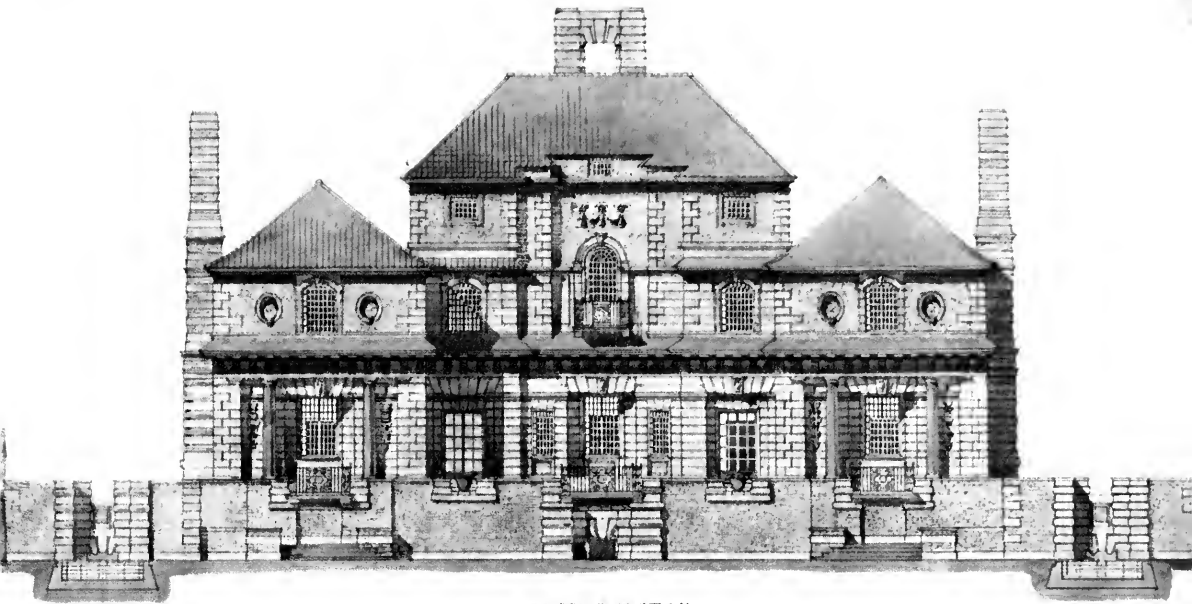
Other times, other methods ; but central truths remain, and every good architect knows that success in planning is won, not by office labour, but by studying a site under varied effects of light, till all the main lines of his house and garden are schemed out, the house being placed at the northern end of the site with an aspect towards the south or west, in order that the front rooms may be not only sunny in themselves, but refreshed by views of a garden all aglow with sunshine and flowers and varied greens. When an architect strolls about a site and "makes his plot," as mediæval builders used to say, he has happy, fortunate ideas, for points are suggested by varying levels of the soil and by the position of trees.

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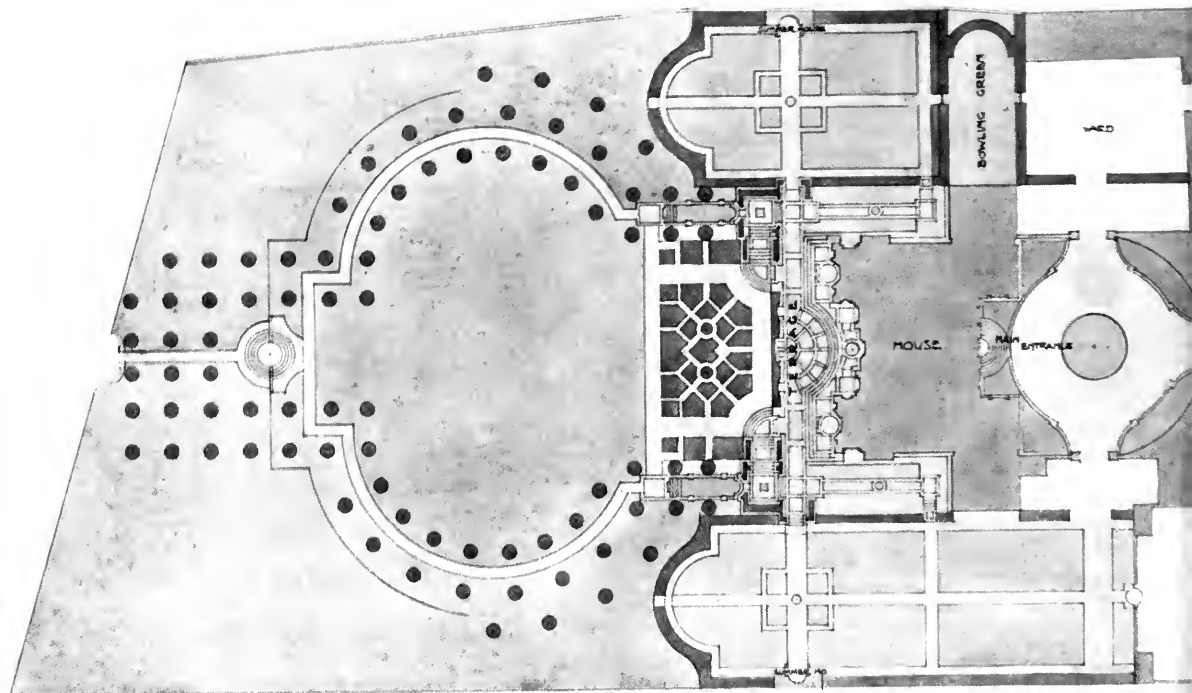
Trees, happily placed on a site, are, of course, invaluable. They give beauty and shade, and help in the attainment of two pleasant things : the charm of age around a new home, and interrupted views ; for gardens ought never to be seen all at once, but should have parts hidden and parts raised up. It is in nooks and corners, as in winding pathways to an arbour, or along terraces shaded by trees and flowering bushes, that mystery dwells, and with it the magic of unexpected art in little simple plots of colour and form.

The ages and sages agree that architects should give infinite care to these garden details of their plans. There is music in all good designs, and by it homes and gardens should be united together. But in the eighteenth century a theory displaced the old-time practice, and architects were expected to bow with meek politeness to a new artist, sometimes called a Landscape Gardener, who seems to have put flower-beds under military discipline and compelled hedges to obey the laws of geometry. He had great power, the Landscape Gardener. With a few words, like "chaste" and "genteel," spoken with assurance, he managed to rule over fox-hunting lords and 'squires, which must have been a difficult feat then, in those gouty days of mixed drinks and too much of them. One landscape gardener, the famous "Capability Brown," an authority on taste at the end of the eighteenth century, had a great dislike for colour in architecture, and said that red bricks put a whole valley in a fever. Brown was followed by Repton ; and it was Repton who destroyed the red brick terraces before the house at Burleigh, complaining that the materials were mean, and that work in red bricks was a scarlet sin against good taste.

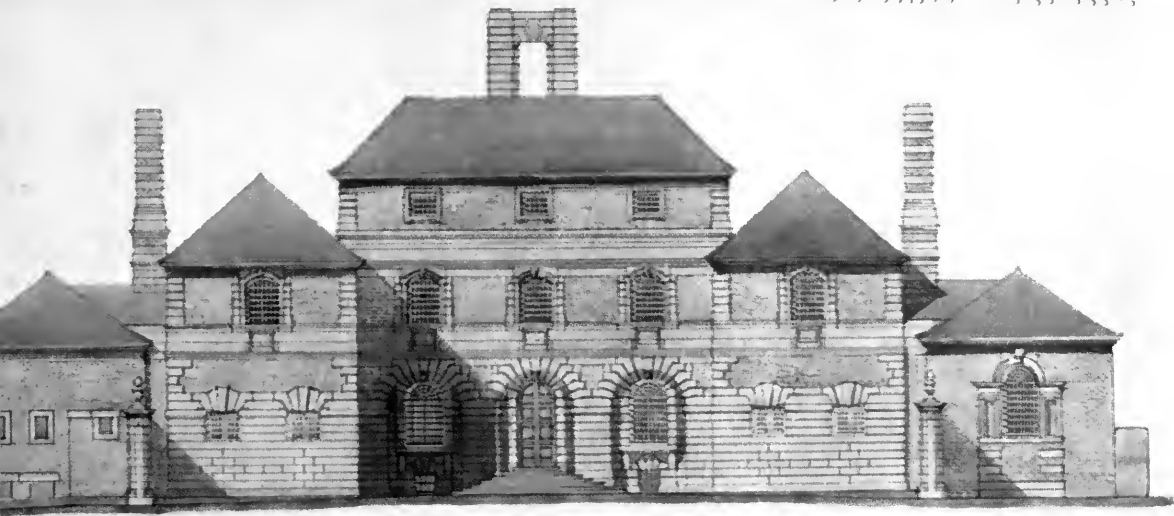
Are we better to-day ? Is it generally admitted now that a good garden design by a clever architect is better by far than formal patterning by a florist ? I fear that a good many persons still believe that an architect will be "too dull," "too severe," or "too thoughtful." There is no harm in asking people to think a little, yet the word thoughtful is becoming a reproach. The type of garden which seems to be the most admired is that which gives charm to old cottages and manors ; and here, we



· SOUTH ELEVATION ·



· BLOCK PLAN · SHOWING GARDEN



·NORTH ELEVATION·

HEATHCOTE, ILKLEY, YORKSHIRE

THE WALLS OF THE HOUSE AND GARDEN ARE BUILT OF CLEAN-CUT DELPH STONE FROM THE IDLE QUARRIES, AND THE 'DRESSINGS ARE IN BLUE MORLEY STONE. THE ROOFS ARE COVERED WITH HAND-MADE PANTILES HAVING A SANDED TEXTURE. THE TERRACES AND PATHS ARE PAVED WITH YORK STONE AND PANELS OF SLATE. THE GROUND FALLS SHARPLY TO THE SOUTH, AND THE OLD BEECH HEDGES FOUND ON THE SITE HAVE BEEN MOVED SO AS TO ENCLOSE THE GARDENS. A STREAM RUNS THROUGH THE GARDEN FROM NORTH TO SOUTH AND HAS A CONSTANT FLOW OF WATER

THE ILLUSTRATIONS ARE FROM DRAWINGS BY HAROLD STEVENS

Edwin L. Lutyens, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

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HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

are told, there is no arrangement at all. That is a mistake. Those old gardens had a plan, but Dame Nature has softened it and veiled it with the haphazardry of her wind-beaten growth. When all is said, a garden design is nothing more than a skeleton, to be clothed with a beauty by which it is never entirely hidden. However good the design may be, it will look cold and bare at first; perhaps ; but that defect soon passes away, and the ground-plan, well-knit and thoughtful, holds together both Nature's work and your own, year by year.

It is a fact worth noting that of the two main styles of garden design, one is Italian and the other English-born. The first is quite Classic in spirit and belongs to the Palladian type of house built in England after the Renaissance dawned, but particularly in the eighteenth century. Its aim was symmetry ; its spirit was artificial. Nature was a slave to it, not a helper with some sweet freedom of action. But, being in sympathy with a grandiose style of architecture, it achieved what was then desired, over-ordered pomp and majesty, often cold and repellent, yet developing an acquired taste in students. Italian Classic gardens still have devoted admirers, even here in England, the land of devious compromise and stubborn individualism.

A good authority* sums up the chief and distinguishing traits of a Classic garden :

“ They all turn on the stateliness of symmetry. The central axis of the Mansion itself, for example, dividing the portico, entrance hall, Grand Hall or Cortile, saloon, and garden-entrance, in the severest symmetry, is continued in one direction, not only through the midst of a spacious symmetrical entrance-court, but along the line of a vast avenue of symmetrical trees, and in the other direction not less symmetrically through the midst of gardens, terraces, alleys, fountains, through the centre of a geometrical basin, and along some further vista perhaps to a distant summit crowned with a column or an obelisk. Upon this grand central line of plan other lines are again formed, crossing and radiating, however capriciously, always in perfect symmetry, and every one becoming in its turn a new basis for similar effects

* *The English Gentleman's House*, 1865. By Robert Kerr, Architect. Page 322.

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of design. In less imposing examples the government of symmetry is no less strict ; the centre line of the House becomes that alike of the garden in front and of the garden in the rear, the basis of a plan all geometrical and all in perfect balance."

This description shows that a Classic garden-design is a kind of geometrical spider-webbing on a grand scale. Its formal intricacy becomes monotonous, wearisome ; it can never be more than a fashion here in England, for a race of sportsmen has no instinctive feeling for hard-and-fast logic and for undeviating symmetry and grandeur. As a Shakespeare could not write in the powdered artfulness of Racine, so our English genius in garden-design cannot express itself properly in a routine of stately affectation. It needs freedom out of doors. Indeed, the English genius has ever been Dame Nature's ally, loving her State Lottery called Chance, and her sameness varied infinitely.

So we find in the English style of garden design, a mingling of thoughtful methods with picturesque surprises. A winding drive leads up to the front door, displacing the regimental, soldierly trees in a Classic avenue. There is no level, well-conducted forest, but a fairyland of green dappled with spinneys, a glorious park, dipping here and there, with trees under which lovers have told their invariable tale generation after generation, and yet believed in the newness of their monosyllables. Ah ! What landscape in serene fair sweetness equals the magic of great England's historic parks and home-made gardens ? We roam there at leisure, not in a geometrical network of alleys and paths, but across beautiful lawns, and amid scattered groups of trees, and in and out of rose gardens ; among so many simple unaffected things of loveliness that Dame Nature seems to play at hide-and-seek with us. It is in effects that appear easily won and unpremeditated that we should make known the joy we feel for garden decoration. Arbours, terraces, parterres of flowers, green banks and stone steps, yew hedges, fountains, a lake with reeds and an islet of evergreens : all these things, and many others, treated with gracious sympathy, belong to an English garden, and diversify variety. Thanks to them, too, architects in their hard practical work keep in touch with

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

poetry, despite the gathering problems of drains and sanitation, of water supply, of heating, and lighting and of new inventions for this and that.

As to garden furniture, gates, easy chairs, tea-tables, long settles, and tubs for plants, let them be well-made and rustic in character. Certain architects have designed excellent things for gardens like Mr. E. L. Lutyens ; and Mr. H. P. White of Bedford is a specialist craftsman with a true feeling for thoroughness.

The Foundation of Houses.

It is a curious fact that Man, who is said to be descended from apes, has been at ease underground since his Pennpit Period. Ages and ages ago he built primitive Venices, showing great skill in the making of interlocked foundations with logs and brushwood held together by piles. Tunnels, pits, bridges, and foundations under water or in places insecure : these are among the jobs that men do best and with the greatest joy. The earth-loving confidence of human nature is now so instinctive that even the most difficult and capricious persons in their dealings with architects rarely make ado about the foundations of houses, as if that one point would certainly be right ; and in this they are not at fault. Only jerry-builders ever scamp a foundation.

Perhaps the most troublesome of natural foundations for building upon is clay, because the moisture in it may be dried up by hot weather, lessening its volume, and causing a house to *give*. Into mud it is easy to drive piles ; or a great solid floor of concrete, two or three feet thick, can be floated over the mud so as to enclose it entirely ; for, of course, the mud must not be squeezed out at the sides by the weight of a building. A solid and continuous body of cement mixed with stones or broken bricks forms an excellent foundation on shifty or unstable sites ; it holds together uniformly, sinking as a whole if it sinks at all. A minor poet says with common sense :

“When houses ‘settle’ badly, here and there,
Mild tenants growl, and easy landlords swear.”

Two kinds of natural foundations deserve to be called ideal.

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The first is gravel, for wet penetrates through gravel, filters through it, and so, as a weight-bearer, it remains unaffected alike by water and dryness. But rock is better still, solid rock such as old castle-builders preferred for their seaward fortresses. Not rock and clay, or rock and pliant earth, this being a foundation that architects find troublesome.

In modern buildings, as a rule, walls are not of the same bulk all the way up; they widen out at the bottom, gripping the foundation with extra courses of brick or with a thickened base of flat stones. This precaution is now thought necessary on all sites except those of solid rock; and, no doubt, by-laws cannot insist upon too much care in these days of "slim" business. Yet in some old castles, which have stood erect against the wind for six centuries, the walls are of the same thickness straight away from the ground!

Is not that a fact worth noting as an example to ourselves? How can we hope to build for the future in the quicksands of cheapness? Those ancient walls have several good lessons to enforce upon builders and architects. One is a question of cement. There are many who believe that our forefathers were careful workmen from the first; but that is a mistake. Mediæval historians, and particularly Matthew Paris, relate how towers fell, how steeples toppled down, and bridges gave way, and manor-villages were carried off by tempests and flooding rivers. It was owing to these accidents that thoroughness—the god-virtue of social life—became popularized by fear. Carpenters then worked for the days to come; and masons had before them as rare models the brickwork and stonework surviving from the Roman times. But, unfortunately, the nearer we approach the modern period, the period introduced by steam labour and the factory system, the weaker the rule of thoroughness becomes in all forms of popular building, giving rise to complaints about bad cement and slipshod methods.

Atkinson, in 1805, complained loudly, and described the difference between old cement and new.

In ancient English buildings the hardest calcareous cements are a mixture of stones and very sharp sand with just enough

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

lime to bind the ingredients together. Only, if sand and gravel mixed with lime are to be the strongest cement, much care must be taken in their use. Limestone contains a good quantity of carbonic acid gas (fixed air) which is expelled by fire ; but no sooner is quick-lime exposed to the air than carbonic acid gas is absorbed, and more readily after quick-lime has been mixed with water. Now, it is that absorption that causes lime to set hard ; and that is why quick-lime gets slow and worthless when it is not kept away from atmospheric action. It ought never to be mixed with water until it is required for immediate work. " From a neglect of this consideration," wrote Atkinson, " mortar is generally bad." Will our own builders note this ?

Recently I watched some men at work restoring the outside walls of a suburban house. They dusted out the mortar as if it were chalk powder ; next, they tinted the old brick-work, making it a pale, thin, yellowy red ; and then refilled the brick joints, tuck-pointing them with white, and using a board to guide their hands, so that the lines of white rubbish were ruled hard and straight. And we come to *that* after a thousand years of reputable methods ! Bad mortar applied not only in narrow strips and with a soulless uniformity, but over an old wall coloured to look like new bricks of a bad tint ! Yet the " builders and decorators " advertised their names on a large panel. If their own joints were tuck-pointed they would be more entertaining than their botched workmanship.

In a London suburb, not very long ago, the genius of hocus-pocus ran wild in house-building ; and report said that in many homes there were only thin tiles between the cellars and the bare ground, which happened to be a wet slope ; damp rose up into the rooms, of course, the very thing which all architects take the greatest care to guard against. Few things, indeed, are worse for health than leakages of damp from a foundation or through outside walls from rainy soil. Mr. J. J. Stevenson has some good remarks on this heading :

" As the material of walls is generally to some extent porous and absorbent of moisture, it is necessary to insert in them, just under the lowest floor, a course of non-porous material,

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such as slate or Caithness pavement, or asphalt, to prevent the damp rising in them from the ground. If the lowest floor is under the level of the ground outside, means must be taken to stop the damp from getting into the wall above the level of this damping course, as it is called, from the moist earth. Sometimes the wall outside is covered with pitch; or loose stones are piled against it up to the ground level, with a drain at the bottom just under the floor-level, to carry off the surface water; or better, an area about six inches wide, with a drain at the bottom, is built all round the house, covered on the top to allow the earth to come up to the walls; or the house may have a wide open area all round, standing in a sort of dry ditch, which is the system usual in town houses. A house in the country looks better rising from the ground, and can be kept perfectly dry even when its floor is under the surface level by making the floor and walls impervious to damp, or by having cellars with openings to the air to keep them ventilated and therefore dry, or by an open space a foot or two high under the floors through which the air passes."*

Again, leave nothing to doubt; be quite certain that your ground floor will keep perfectly dry. So make it a rule to cover all foundations with asphalt or with cement as a damp-proof bed under the lowest floors. When this work is well done, leaving neither crack nor crevice anywhere, black beetles and other vermin cannot enter a house.

Some architects are so particular in these matters that, after building a snug bed of concrete for a house to rest upon, they pave the lowest rooms with slate, a thorough method, no doubt; but servants object, so I am told, saying that slates are unpleasant to walk upon and hurt the feet. Is that true? or is it an example of the unbending conservatism of domestics?

* "House Architecture." By J. J. Stevenson. Macmillan, 1880; page 158, vol. ii.

CHAPTER FOUR

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : ROOFS

When we look at a building from outside, the eye rises quickly to the roof, rests there for a moment or two, and then travels slowly down the walls to the ground. From this we learn that the human eye is always Gothic, ascending to a high summit, and feeling the upspring and rhythm of vertical lines. For Gothic architecture is like the growth of trees ; it rises towards the upper air and the sunlight. A Gothic church seems actually to grow out of the earth ; and its spire, which in old times was an emblem of civic pride and aspiration, shows how Gothic art, like a skylark soaring above its nest, is near at once to the dual points of heaven and home. In Classic architecture, on the other hand, the spirit is not heavenward and Christian, but earthward and Pagan. Classic buildings press down upon the ground, rest upon Mother Earth with all their weight ; their main lines denote a majestic repose, for they are long horizontally, not tall with an up-going flight and magic.

It is important that you should understand these and other distinctions between existing styles of architecture, because they arise from differences of method in roofing any space, as a space between pillars, or between a door. The character of Greek building, and of all that has grown from it, is derived from the

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horizontal lintel ; it depends on the simple idea of roofing a space with a single beam or a single stone put from side to side of two upright bearers. The character of Roman building, though it owes much to the Greek orders, has in its noble efforts a method of roofing space with round arches, as in the vaultings of aqueducts or in the colossal heaping of rough stones into arches for a magnificent amphitheatre. But, despite this weight-bearing principle of the round arch, the dominant lines of Roman architecture are horizontal and reposeful. It is not till we come to the development of the Roman arch in Gothic work that we feel those airy up-springing lines which Goethe likened to frozen music and which denote in architecture the heaven-directed ideals of Christianity.

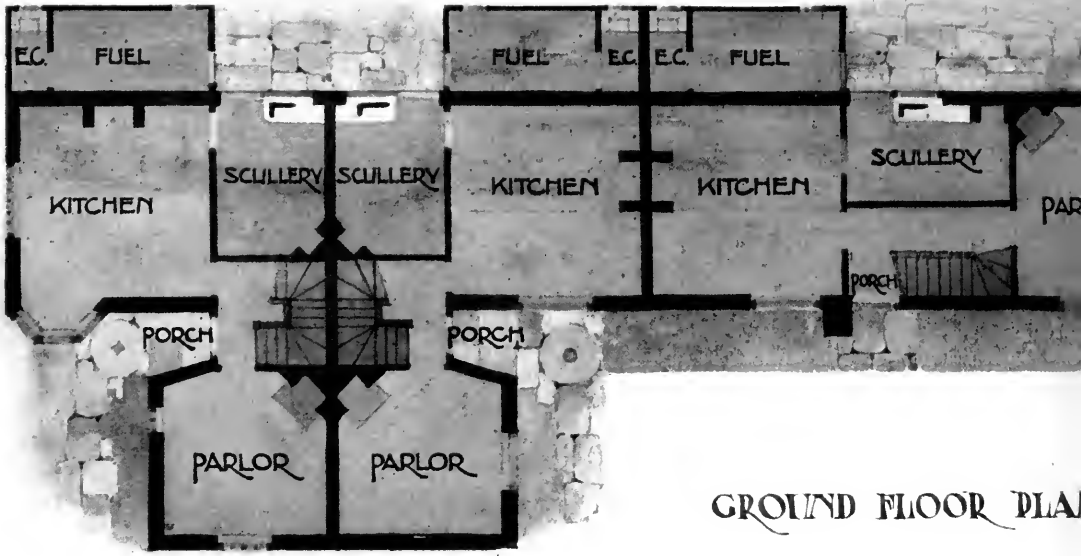
Our earliest buildings, called Saxon and Norman, are Romanesque ; they have the round arch, and are Roman also in stern power and practicalness, a power sometimes gigantically scornful of grace and of fanciful gladness. But the Norman style, towards the close of the twelfth century, began to pass into the Early English manner, with its lancet windows, and its pointed arch, and its high-peaked roofs. True Gothic was born.

Pointed arches and peaked roofs had a splendid history during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries ; but in the fifteenth a gradual change was evolved, till at last the Tudor arch, depressed in shape, became a counterpart in Gothic work of that round-headed arch of Roman origin which the Renaissance would soon bring back into England. Remember, then, that English Gothic architecture roofed spaces first with pointed arches, and then with arches having flattened tops, as if pressed down by the weight above them.

This said, we pass on to the question—What, in domestic building, is a roof ? It is the coverlid of a home, and it tells us from outside that under its protection there will be no avoidable dog-day heat and no wet discomforts from falling rain or sleet or snow. Roofs, then, are the sunshades of architecture, and the umbrellas also.

For all that, they have to be studied in their relation to things other than climates, being affected by styles and by preferences of taste. If we go back in thought to the fifteenth and sixteenth

STATE OF
CALIFORNIA



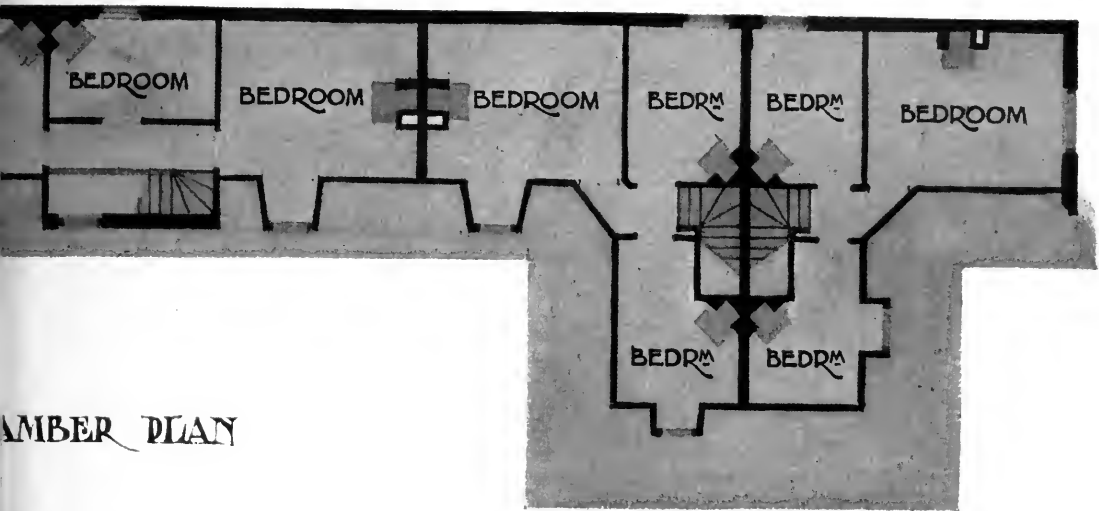
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



A ROW OF THATCHED COTTAGES

FRONT

Edwin L. Lutyens



CHAMBER PLAN



THE DRAWING BY HAROLD STEV

chitect, London

TO VINO
DIPLOMA

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : ROOFS

centuries, when the English Home became distinguished from the English House, we find that there are points of resemblance between late Gothic roofs and those which returned to England from Italy at the Renaissance.

The ancient Romans built flat roofs, and the Italian Classic style of the Renaissance was also flat-roofed, utterly unlike the early Gothic coverlids with their steep pitch and their pointed gables. It has often been argued that flat roofs belong to hot countries, because they make comfortable sleeping-places after a day of ardent heat; while tall roofs are northern by origin, because they rise up boldly to meet the rain and snow, forming such a visible protection from damp and cold as the eye feels to be necessary. This argument *sounds* all right, and Ruskin did his best to drive it home. Consider this lively quotation from his Lectures on Architecture :

“ I am sure that all of you must readily acknowledge the charm which is imparted to any landscape by the presence of cottages; and you must over and over again have paused at the wicket gate of some cottage garden, delighted by the simple beauty of the honeysuckle porch and latticed window. Has it ever occurred to you to ask the question, what effect the cottage would have upon your feelings if it had *no roof*? no visible roof, I mean; if instead of the thatched slope, in which the little upper windows are buried deep, as in a nest of straw—or the rough shelter of its mountain shales—or warm colouring of russet tiles—there were nothing but a flat leaden top to it, making it look like a large packing-case with windows in it? I don't think the rarity of such a sight would make you feel it to be beautiful; on the contrary, if you think over the matter you will find that you actually do owe, and ought to owe, a great part of your pleasure in all cottage scenery, . . . to the conspicuousness of the cottage roof, to the subordination of the cottage itself to its covering, which leaves, in nine cases out of ten, really more roof than anything else. It is, indeed, not so much the white-washed walls, nor the flowery garden, nor the rude fragments of stones set for steps at the door, nor any other picturesqueness of the building which interest you, so much as the grey bank of its

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heavy eaves, deep-cushioned with green moss and golden stone-crop. And there is a profound, yet evident, reason for this feeling. The very soul of the cottage—the essence and meaning of it—are in its roof; it is that, mainly, wherein consists its shelter; that, wherein it differs most completely from a cleft in rocks or bower in woods. It is in its thick impenetrable coverlid of close thatch that its whole heart and hospitality are concentrated. Consider the difference, in sound, of the expressions *beneath my roof* and *within my walls*, . . . and you will quickly see how important a part of a cottage the roof must always be to the mind as well as to the eye, and how, from seeing it, the greatest part of our pleasure must arise.

“Now, do you suppose that which is so all-important in a cottage, can be of small importance in your own dwelling-house? Do you think that by any splendour of architecture—any height of storeys—you can atone to the mind for the loss of the aspect of the roof? It is vain to say that you take the roof for granted. You may as well say you take a man’s kindness for granted. . . . Whatever external splendour you may give your houses, you will always feel there is something wanting unless you see their roofs plainly. And this especially in the north. In southern architecture the roof is of far less importance; but here the soul of domestic building is in the largeness and conspicuousness of the protection against ponderous snow and driving sleet.”

There! A fine passage, with plenty of thought in its poetic home-sentiment; and its point of view ought to be kept in mind, even after a little correcting examination. For we note first of all as a technical fact that different roof-coverings require a different pitch or slope. Thatches, for instance, to throw off the rain quickly, must be steep or steepish; while it is unsafe in principle to lay tiles on a lower pitch than a right angle, though builders do at times risk a gentler slope without accident. Slates, being thin and light and flat, need for their support a framework less heavy than tiles do; and they can be laid with safety at a lower pitch. This applies also to pantiles, but these require a stronger framework. Now technical difficulties and requirements influence craftsmen, and I do not think that any cottage builder thought

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : ROOFS

of his roof from Ruskin's standpoint. Tradition ruled him, and tradition is always a matter of style.

In Switzerland, for example, where the weather is as bad as our own, roofs ought to be tall and steep, if climate has had any marked influence on their form and structure. Yet Swiss roofs are low, just because their traditional methods are Romanesque, not pointed Gothic; and so we must look for the spirit of a style when we wish to understand a type of roof-construction.

Ruskin implied, even if he did not think, that Gothic roofs were always steep and high; and many other writers have omitted to say that English roofs, during the greatest period of our *domestic* Gothic, from 1450 to about 1570, became flat; indeed, were often of a lower pitch than that of a Greek Temple. They were in sympathy with a level cornice.

In France, on the other hand, where pointed arches and stone vaulting were retained, Gothic roofs of the same century shot up higher and higher, into shapes remarkably picturesque. English windows also lost their pointed heads, and no longer rose in a tier one above the other. They became square, and were massed close together in horizontal bands; and above them, very often, jolly gables atoned to the eye for the insignificant roofing, as at Moreton Hall. And so it is unhistoric to talk about climate in the evolution of English roofs. Tradition says that we may choose for a roof any pitch we like, remembering that those with a good slope are the easiest to build.

But is good taste at odds here with tradition? At this point Ruskin comes in, yet one hesitates to accept his views without reservation, because the low level lines of Tudor houses are friendly and winsome. Still, rules have exceptions; and the rule here is that hidden roofs in a wet climate *look* less homely and hospitable than visible roofs. Architects have felt this during the last half century; but some among them have gone too far at times, introducing, for example, French roofs of the Renaissance type, which in towns have a serious disadvantage. For they rise up so high that they cause neighbouring chimneys to smoke; then the chimney-stacks have to be built much taller, and sweeps

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find the task of cleaning them a very tiresome encouragement to bad language.

Some architects, in building their high-peaked roofs, forget to leave in the upper rooms enough wall-space for bedroom furniture; a mistake that tires the patience of the gentlest housewives, wardrobes being essential to comfort. And there is another bad type of roof. It forms two gables on the front elevation and two at the back; between them, running from end to end, a double roof is formed; this makes a big central valley, where wind may collect in swirls and interfere with the draughting of chimneys.

Again, as roofs are coverlids, let them jut out beyond the walls; over-hanging eaves are desirable for three reasons:—

(1), They soften and yet mark out the transition from wall to roof; (2), they throw along a wall a line of cool shadow; and (3), they give to a home a sheltered, cared-for look.

Then, as to the general treatment of roofs, the very first quality to be shown is unity of impression. Dame Nature has always that quality in her coned fungi and domed mushrooms; and I cannot help thinking that the present day masters of roof-construction, like Mr. E. L. Lutyens and Mr. Lorimer, have taken hints from Nature's art in coverlids. Mr. E. Guy Dawber says with truth that we often treat our roofs too severely and mechanically, keeping them much too flat, and forming hips and ridges that destroy the surface qualities of texture. In the beautiful stone slate roofs of Gloucestershire, as in the blue slate roofs of France, the valleys are worked in a wide sweep, enabling one roof to intersect another in a charming fashion, without any hard line of demarcation. It is a bad method to put a rigid gutter of lead, and to cut up the roof into varying planes.

A few other points. Builders of the eighteenth century used to think that a pitch of one in three was all that roofs ought to have; and it was just enough to turn the wet. Imagine how the Gothic revivalist sneered! He preferred a mistake very different from that, for his roofs became so steep that thawing snow would not remain upon them, but tumbled off in heavy loads, frightening visitors at the front door, and killing a cat

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now and again. Mr. J. J. Stevenson built some roofs like those, but his conscience reproached him ; he felt that he ran a risk of committing manslaughter, since workmen could not, without danger, repair such peaks. Alpine climbers don't mend slates and tiles.

All things being considered, roofs of a good medium pitch, neither high nor low, are the best for us, for in conjunction with a few chimneys—tall and massive chimneys, placed in well-balanced positions—they make attractive sky-lines, and impart character enough to country houses. But in towns, of course, the tendency of street architecture is to rise higher and higher, so that roofs cannot be seen at all very often.

Why, then, should they not be perfectly flat, so as to serve as gardens and playgrounds ? Thirty years ago, or thereabouts, some London Board Schools were put up with playground-roofs, but they were not a great success. It is a hard task to build a water-tight flat roof strong enough to bear traffic. Indeed, architects found out that the expense was at times greater than buying land for a school-yard. Their flat roofs could not be covered with lead, because lead gave a bad footing for children at their games ; and cement had drawbacks too. If the building settled at all, the cement cracked and let in water—a point to be remembered now, in these days of tube railways.

Yet the question of flat roofs for town houses ought not to be abandoned ; it deserves the most careful thought from men of science, particularly in relation to those tragical districts where consumptives are bred in two-roomed tenements. Areas of health await us below the chimney-pots ; and it would be a great charity to add them to the lungs of any industrial centres, as promenades for the jaded poor. It is a dream, perhaps, yet architects can solve any problem to which they give urgent thought and care.

So we arrive at the conclusion that, while visible good roofs are necessary for country homes, flat garden-roofs have a great future in big towns, as playgrounds in the air, where consumption may breathe fresh winds and vanish like smoke from chimneys.

As to the materials with which roofs are covered, they consist

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of slates, tiles, pantiles, stone slates, straw-thatching, reed-thatching, zinc and lead, and copper too, from time to time.

Russet tiles, plain and flat, are, I think, the most typically English and delightful; their colour is more attractive than that of most British slates, and see how receptive they are to mosses and lichens and stonecrop! In summer, too, their red tint reflects the sun's heat, keeping a house cool; while in winter we owe warmth to their bulk and thickness. But tiles, like bricks, vary much in quality, and some are so porous that they drink up water like a sponge, as if the Fairy of the Home had compelled them in a bad temper to sign a rain-drinking pledge, in order that careless householders may be punished. For when the water stored up in tiles begins to evaporate, we soon feel it indoors, the upper rooms becoming as cold as refrigerators. It is for this reason that tiles, like bricks, ought to be tested before they are bought and used. You have only to see how much weight they have gained after standing in water for a day. Note, too, that they should have a good strong texture, with some diversity of shape.

This applies also to pantiles, another picturesque roof-covering. Yet pantiles have long been discredited by a fact which ought to make them popular; though the least expensive material of all, they are not vulgar-looking. Some critics say that, owing to their strong lines of curved light and shade, they attract too much attention; but this defect is soon hidden by patches of moss and weather-stain. And here and there, on old English houses with Mansard roofs, pantiles and flat tiles are used together, the latter being placed on the lower steep part, and the pantiles above them along the flatter surface. But remember always that pantiles do not fit well on a roof having a broken stretch, as when dormer-windows look out at us with their blinking eyes.

William Atkinson, who wrote in 1805, said that pantiles were "the cheapest coverings," reputable workmanship being common then and inexpensive. J. J. Stevenson, writing seventy-five years later, had a different tale to tell. Pantiles had not become dear, but "they required good and careful work, which was not always to be got." The earlier writer advocated plain,

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flat tiles, because, though dearer than pantiles, their "snug compactness had on a cottage a much better effect;" while the later writer, after speaking warmly in praise of pantiles, hesitated, remembering the slipshod methods of modern workmen. Why do we talk of progress?

As to slates, there are many varieties. The purple Welsh kinds, usually bad in colour, are often brittle; they have never the charm of the rare Westmorelands, with their tender, sea-green hue. Scotch slates, dark in tint, are generally small and thick, unlike the big ones from Lancashire; but in a mountain landscape they look very well, being shaggy and rough in texture, as befits a land of heather and of Highland cattle.

As a general rule it is good colour that our British slates need. They have not the slim daintiness and shining blue of French slates; and British quarry-masters are so fond of uniform tints that they throw away into rubbish heaps those slabs which have mottled hues, and which would break up the cold monotony of Lancashire slates and the hard purple of Welsh origin. These rubbish heaps are places to be raided, and many an architect may have done something more useful than complain about their waste of good material.

Can we hope that British tiles, moss-grown and cheerful, are becoming, or will become, more popular than purple slates? If so, then taste, not trade, is to be thanked, for trade defends the quarry-master, slates, you see, being not only low in price; they are easy to pack away in railway trucks; and when they reach their journey's end and arrive at the building-site, they are easy to fix in position, being light, thin and flat, so they lie close together in a neat job, with their edges nicely fitted. Then they begin a long life. That is a virtue in the green Westmorelands, but not in a good many other kinds.

The stone slates of Gloucestershire, and the stone slabs with which Oxford houses and colleges used to be roofed, have always had many devotees; for grey stones look rich and beautiful when they are dappled with green moss and with golden stonecrop. Architects use them now in convenient districts, since it is always best to choose local materials.

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Thatching? What can be said about that roof-cover?

First, there is a widespread delusion to the effect that straw-thatches were introduced by poverty and cheapness. But straw has never been cheap in England. During the Middle Ages a good part of it was left in the fields to be ploughed into the earth as manure; and that which was harvested and garnered had a great value, for straw formed part of the feed of sheep during the winter, and to sheep and their wool England owed her wealth. Straw being so important to farmers, reeds were often used both for thatching and for the litter that covered floors; and turf made other sound roofs, good square sods, as we are still reminded by the cone-shaped huts of English charcoal-burners. With heather many cottages were thatched; and Scotsmen now regret that this old-time fashion is vanishing from the Highlands.

As in the past, so to-day, thatched roofs are not cheap. Reeds are difficult to get in sufficient quantities, particularly the Norfolk reeds; straw is worth its carriage, and the art of thatching needs great care and much traditional skill. That is one reason why it appeals so strongly to our modern architects, who, whenever local by-laws permit them, as in the Eastern counties, are reviving thatched roofs, not only on cottages and barns, but on some large houses recently built, as well as for garden decoration, as in tea-houses and arbours. And a society has been formed for the purpose of attacking the district by-laws which forbid the use of thatch as a covering for roofs, though in every county there are old thatched buildings which prove beyond all doubt that they are not often dangerous. Thatched roofs were objected to in towns as early as the twelfth century, like timber walls; and certainly there is a risk from fire when thatched buildings stand in wide-spreading towns. It is in the country that thatching "pays."

"Avoid, as far as possible, definite valleys, dormers standing clear above the roof and parapets; and coped gable ends are not advisable. At all these junctions there is a chance for wet to get through. In some counties, the weakness of the valley has been overcome by combining tiles with the thatch, the tiles lining the valleys for a foot or eighteen inches on each side of the

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intersection, beginning at the eaves and finishing near the top of the valley under a cresting of thatch, these crests being a workmanlike device to avoid the disconnected look which would result if the tiles were carried all the way up. In other instances where the gabled dormers jut out clear away from the roof, they have been covered with tiles ; the valleys also, and where the cheeks of the dormer leave the main roof ; all the rest being thatched.”*

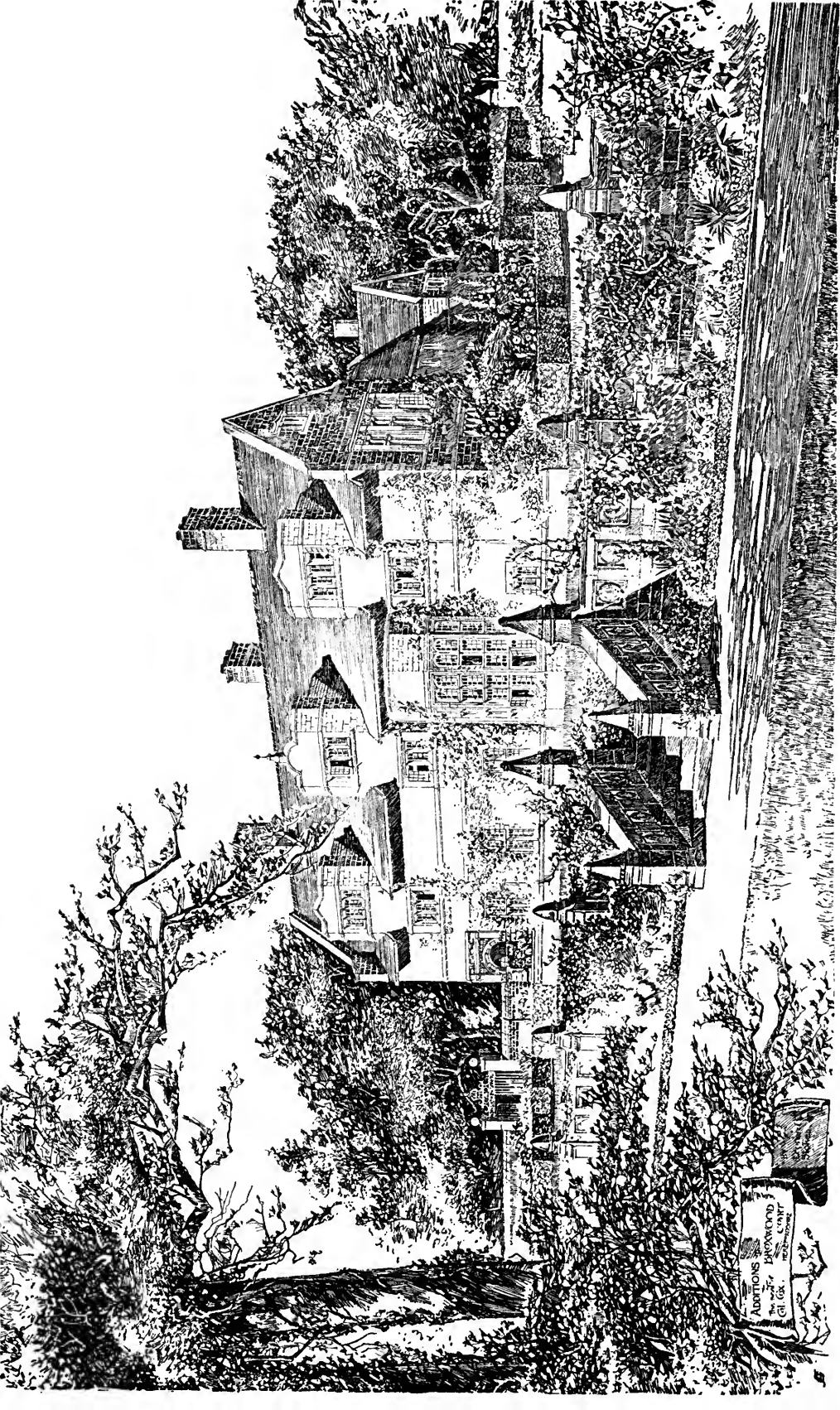
But there is another side to this matter. Some architects object to thatching on modern homes on the score that it attracts vermin, particularly rats and nipping insects.

It is an art to prepare the straw and lay it properly ; and you will like to know the traditional methods. The following information I owe to Mr. E. Guy Dawber.

The straw must not be broken or bruised, so cut the corn with a scythe and thrash it by hand. This done, comb it out like hair, making each straw quite straight, and throwing aside any fragments or bent pieces. Pile into bundles and sprinkle with water, but take care to make the straw only moist, not dripping wet ; and now the bundles are tied with tarred twine to the cross battens on the rafters, until the whole roof is covered. Other bundles are then laid on top and fastened down with hazel pegs, which are made from a one-inch stick cut into four pieces when the wood is green, and bent to the required angle. The pegs are driven in some four or six inches apart ; they fix each layer of straw ; and the thatch as it thickens in bulk is made as hard and tight as pressure can make it. As to the ridge that is a hard nut to crack ; it requires very skilful handling, with larger pins and straw specially chosen. For the valleys Mr. Dawber employs reeds, which make stronger valleys than those of the best straw. To complete the whole job, the thatch is combed down, then beaten flat ; and the verges and eaves are trimmed with care till they are level and true.

* "The British Architect," Feb. 25th, 1909, p. 149.

* See also "The British Architect," Feb. 26th, 1909, page 146.



ADDITIONS TO BROXWOOD COURT, HEREFORDSHIRE

MATERIALS: STONE WALLS AND A TILED ROOF (TO CORRESPOND WITH THE OLD HOUSE)

Leonard Stokes, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

CHAPTER FIVE

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : WALLS AND THEIR MATERIALS

A city friend says to me :

“We have started a new age of building, and you must welcome the new King of Architecture, His Majesty Ferro-Concrete, with his systems of steel and concrete construction for houses and for public works.”

Then my friend pays tribute to this new sovereign. He speaks for twenty minutes or so, but says never a word about any one thing that belongs to architecture as a humane art. He is delighted with the many facts and fancies of business which have gathered already about this new building science. It appears that eight-roomed houses can now be put up for £130, “durable, capable of good architectural treatment, and with a fine finish internally.” By Jove ! What a rare dish of cheapness to set before the tax-burdened public ! Palaces for £3,000, may be !

So H. M. Ferro-Concrete has courtiers who know how to boom into popularity those of his qualities which are sure to win attention from commercial men. One writer says, indeed, that the least costly work in steel and concrete will last more reputably than the jerry-builder's villa tenements, which, after about three years' occupation, cannot be let at rents sufficient

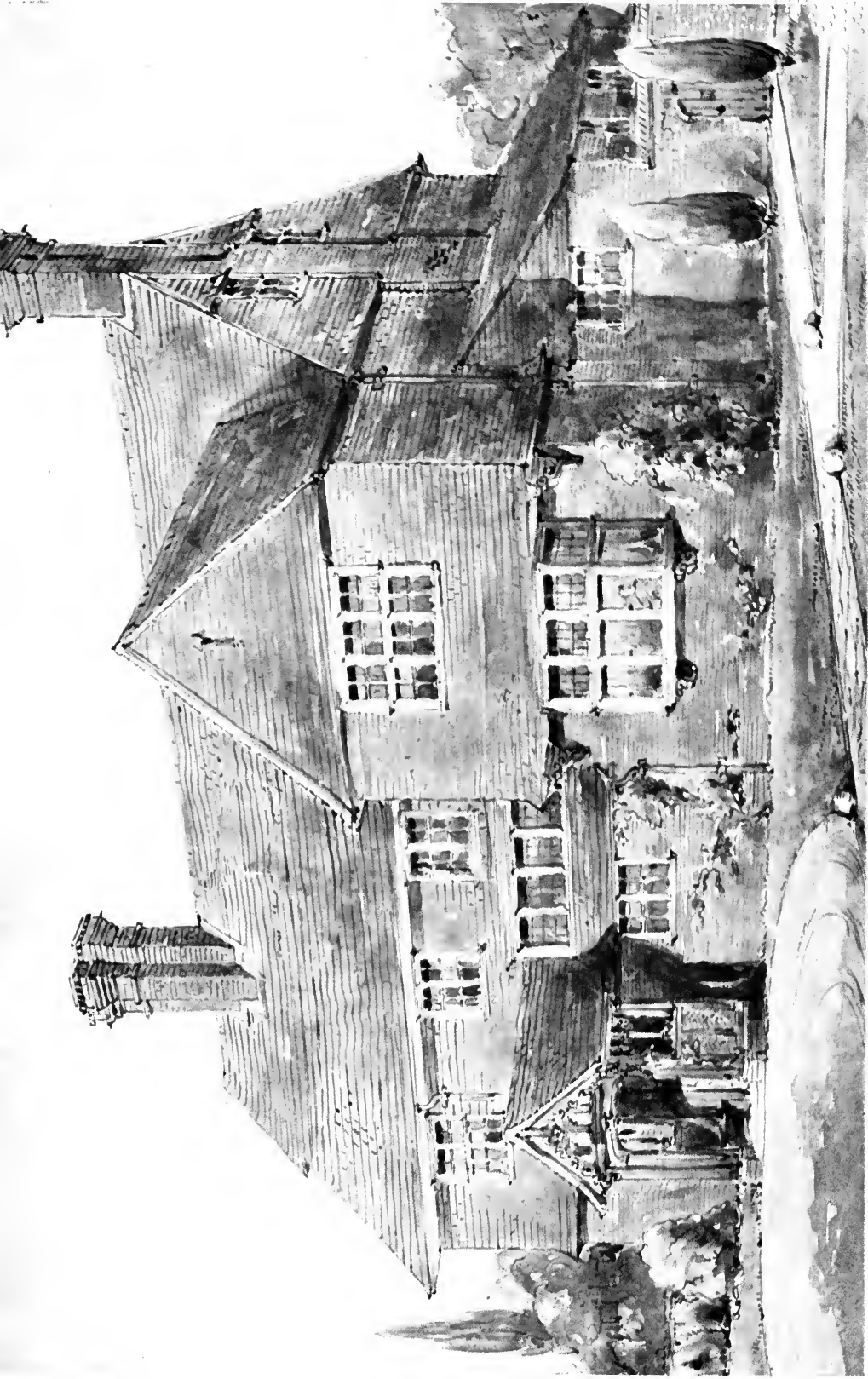
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to pay a working interest to the owners, who are not, of course, the jobsters that put them up as a selling speculation.

The supporters of Ferro-Concrete have taken for their trade motto an old watchword, or battle-phrase, of the Liberal Party: "Progress through Retrenchment and Economy." But Science has had the same motto since she began in the nineteenth century to scamper ahead along utilitarian lines, making discoveries to save wages and time and thought, often with loathly results; as in the case of the aniline dyes, for example, which are still vastly inferior to the preceding dyestuffs. Science *minus* art in household things is a reign of quantity over quality; it quickens the pulse of trade by impoverishing the supply of blood, and raising it to fever heat.

Let us then be careful in our attitude to Ferro-Concrete, a new young ruler over the commercial mind. There is no need for us to shout and cheer at the beginning of his reign. The true business of a critic is to watch and wait, because Time not only approves many a thing which at first was condemned, but goes away from most things which have instant and great popularity. Men of business, scheming for the hour, cannot expect to be safe guides in any matter that affects the artistic prestige of a nation, as in the case of building experiments.

So, when we are told that with steel-framed concrete, workmen save time and space and money, build well and rapidly, using thinner walls and leaving an enlarged area for rooms; when we feel the booming winds of advertisement, let us ask for the birth certificate of this young and experimental sovereign. It is only about a generation ago since Monier hit upon the idea of embedding steel rods in concrete; and although that idea has now blossomed out into systems of building, all animate with promise, the youth of Ferro-Concrete is a criticism in itself, because the worth of architecture is tested by centuries of rain, frost, wind and storm, outside wear and tear, as well as by that inner or civil war among its combined materials by which a building is tried daily generation after generation. Experiments are being made with public money, and this, too, is right and wise; because ferro-concrete may not be—what science has



SMALL HOUSE AT ROYSTON, RED BRICKS AND RUSSET TILES

REPRODUCED FROM A DRAWING IN WATER-COLOUR

John Belcher, R.A., Architect, London

WALLS AND THEIR MATERIALS

been too often—the cuckoo of business in the nest of art styles and their national refinements. On the contrary, its capabilities may be developed into a new type of genuine architecture, not only less expensive than any other, but lighter and cleaner, proof against sound, proof against cold, firm and stable, and with the dual beauty of romance and quiet stateliness.

All that may happen. Steel and concrete may be the very materials in which an industrial type of society can express itself in the most fitting and beautiful manner. Future times may owe to their systems of constructive art cities as fair to look upon as was London when her romance of picturesque homes was known everywhere as the White Town. Why not?

The answer to that question will be given by two imperial gifts: the genius that makes money and the wisdom that spends it well. These were somehow at one, friendly allies, during the greatest periods of architecture; and that is why the simple conditions necessary to art—that is, to faithfulness in thorough invention—were loved and safeguarded. Craftsmen were true to their materials, and true to the existing ideals of home life and religion; loyal to the beauty that makes common things a joy, and loyal to that future which their own children heralded from early cradle days.

Meantime, anyway, only four things seem to be quite clear about Ferro-Concrete:

(1) It appears to have in it the seed of a great future; and it may begin its career by slaying the jerry-builder, who may not be able to compete against it without the aid of specialists.

(2) Its science is work for engineers, while its art must come from architects trained to use it with thought and feeling;

(3) But it may be advertised into a hurried boom, like the one which spoils the adaptation of house architecture for dwelling-flats; and again,

(4) It has to defeat that modern tendency of mind which speculates for the hour and not for the generations to be born.

This habit of mind is more masterful than a Napoleon. Its one aim always is to make a new conquest over natural forces, to bind Nature by another forged chain to the motor car of

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business. Yet we should do better if we studied her methods. Nature is inexorably slow and sure ; and for the gestation and birth of each among her living things she has fixed time limits. Would that our civilisation were as wise ! True progress has ever been as slow of growth as are yew trees.

If Ferro-Concrete were opposed by industrial aims, instead of being supported by them, its chance of success along thorough lines would be helped by slow experiments ; but already there is too much talk about its appeal to the devotees of cheapness. It is mentioned in connection with golf pavilions, industrial flats, town offices, suburban villas, and other business jobs ; while critics say that the Local Government Board should appoint a Committee of Inquiry, so that all attainable facts may be published with criticisms as a guide to public opinion.

Years and years ago it was realized that good cement concrete might have many advantages for walls, being less expensive than stones and bricks, easier and cheaper to carry from place to place, and having three essential qualities of a building material : solidity, enduring strength, and a non-porous fibre through which moisture could not soak. "Is there any reason, then," it was asked, "why concrete walls, treated in accordance with the nature of their material, should not be good in art ?" Several replies were given. It was pointed out that solid walls of concrete—*i.e.*, of Portland cement mixed up with gravel—would hinder and make costly all alterations which are easy to be made when walls are composed of stones or of bricks, because these can be pulled down course by course. Further, a house in concrete would be uniform and solid in all its parts, as much so, indeed, as a stone jug ; and so, if its foundation sank at all unevenly (a risk to be thought of with care in a city with underground railways), the walls would crack from bottom to top, like the body of a stone jug when fractured by accident. Then, as to the difference in price between concrete and bricks and concrete and stone, it was not much in the long run, because the finishing workmanship was the same, and the initial expenses for concrete were raised by the making of wooden moulds into which the fluid material was run, and which cost a good deal for a single house.

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Owing to these considerations several kinds of concrete walls were tried. Sometimes the material was cast into blocks ; it then made a new sort of stone, the ingredients being pebbles or gravel and Portland cement ; but although excellent building work was done with this composition, there was no economy, except in rare cases when gravel was unusually cheap and when brick and stone were exceptionally expensive. In cottage building along stereotyped lines, when many little homes were manufactured at the same time and in one pattern, the concrete was made into slabs a few inches thick, and the poor had the comfort of knowing that their walls, though cheap, were dry.

But the most interesting experiments of all were those in which the houses were solid concrete through and through, from the external walls to the roofs, and from the ceilings and the inner walls to the rigid floors. Moulds were used, moulds of boards and planks, which, of course, had to be shaped to the forms of openings, as in the case of windows and doorways. Outside walls were built in great solid courses two or three feet high, and as thick as ordinary house walls. An efficient mould having been made with boards, liquid cement mingled with gravel was poured into it, and allowed to set to a firm consistence : then the mould was moved along and another piece of wall added to the first. The first stage or course being finished and solid, another was added on top, and so on till the work was completed. The effect was picturesque and good, for the pebbles peeped out here and there, making a roughened texture, and the building method was clearly shown in the markings left by the mould of boards. But this, unluckily, was not appreciated by the Victorians, who preferred the demon of smooth uniformity, so a plaster coating was smeared over the uneven surface, and then scored with lines in imitation of stone joints. J. J. Stevenson protested, as well he might, and said that the real concrete surface ought rather to be made more emphatic as by enforcing the lines of junction between the courses. Or, again, if plaster were applied over the concrete, why not enrich the uniformity with colour or with good stamped ornament, as in some mediæval house walls ?*

* See J. J. Stevenson, vol. ii., pp. 180-185.

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These experiments are valuable to the public to-day, now that concrete is united to the sound-conducting qualities of steel.

Turning now to the old historic materials of wall-construction, we find that there is not one among them which cannot be useful to us in some part of our homes and gardens. Even mud-and-timber huts, thatched with straw, are useful and picturesque when transformed into a modern garden-house. There is no reason why they should look primitive, aboriginal, like the mud huts in the French camps around Metz during the war against Germany. Only the material and its old building methods need be borrowed. Mud cottages were built later than a hundred years ago; and their walls were comfortable and very durable.

The skeleton of a cottage was made with upright pieces of timber four inches square, placed at a distance of about fifteen inches from each other, and firmly braced and tied together by horizontal pieces, whereby floors and the roof were supported. To the upright timbers strong plastering laths were nailed in a horizontal direction; and mud—composed of earth rather inclining to clay mixed up with chopped straw—was laid over the laths with a trowel. Each layer of mud was allowed to dry before another was added; a practice followed also by the house-martin in the building of its nest with loam and bits of broken straw. As soon as the last coating was set and hard, forming a composition not unlike that of sun-burned bricks, a thin outside film of lime and sand was carefully put on. Inside, the cottage was lathed, and plastered either with mud or with lime and hair.*

It is worth noting that the most stalwart mud walls were made up of clay and a large portion of sharp sand in angular particles; this kind of sand held the clay together, so the mud plaster was less friable, less likely to crack, than when made of moist earth mixed with fine sand. And clay had another advantage in our wet climate: it was not injured by rain during the building processes. Mud walls can be decorated with pebbles,

* Contrast the descriptions given by Atkinson in his "Cottage Architecture," p. 14, and by Sidney O. Addy, "The Evolution of the English House," p. 40.

WALLS AND THEIR MATERIALS

and they are very friendly to creeping plants, a point worth noting in connection with pavilions and tea-houses.

If this kind of wall seems too complicated, you can try another method, one long used at Pisa, in Italy. It is good and useful, but attempts to introduce it into England were not successful a hundred years ago, because wet seasons are disastrous to its proper use. After building a foundation wall with brick or stone about two feet above the ground, you proceed as follows. The first thing you need is a movable wooden case without either top or bottom, and with a mouth as wide as the wall of your foundation. Let the case be about four feet high and one third the length of the wall, or half its length if convenient. Put the case *in situ* and fasten it with wedges; then fill it, little by little, with common earth from the fields, dry earth, taking care to ram the soil down so as to make it hard all through. This done, move the case about until the walls are built up to the eaves. Wait for them to dry, and then plaster them outside with lime and sand. A projecting roof is essential, of course, as walls of this friable kind do not stand rain followed by frost.

These suggestions are for garden houses. But the next historic type of wall, known as half-timbering, is, as you know, still admirable for good homes; and its origin and technique have a chapter in English history. Some introductory facts are given on page 64, and here are some others.

Although England was a forest country, where vast woodlands were turned little by little into fields (*i.e.*, felled spaces), she did not happen to grow that very kind of tree which made the best timber houses, and which was greatly liked by many of the Northern peoples who settled here. The Scandinavians, for example, brought with them to England a love for deep and dim pinewoods, and for cosy, charming houses made with pine logs, straight and long. These were laid one above another with a good layer of moss in between them; and in order that they might fit neatly together and make a weather-tight level wall, they were slightly flattened on both the upper and the under surface, and their thick and thin ends were reversed in each course. The moss was a sort of natural mortar to bind the

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materials together and to keep out wind and wet. Sometimes the outside was weather-boarded with narrow planks that overlapped ; and the walls inside were often covered with a smooth wainscoting. To this day these pinewood houses are built by Norwegian craftsmen, who frequently put a stone foundation under their logs, so that the wood may not be decayed by resting for weeks at a time on wet soil or in melting snow. The long persistence of traditions in this architecture arises from the fact that solid wood, though a good conductor of sound, is non-conductible in regard to cold and heat. Thus, in snowy and frost-bound lands, there could be no better walls than those of solid timber ; and this explains why in Northern Europe the people kept loyal to their wood architecture, despite much opposition from town authorities on account of fires. In London, as early as the twelfth century, municipal efforts were made to discourage timber-nogging and to give some vogue to the use of stone and brick. Yet the old style outlived all thwarting regulations till after the Great Fire of 1655, when "post-and-pan houses," as they were called, white-washed yearly, were put down by law.

That was right in a crowded town. But timbered work is still excellent for country houses. Tradition has given it the name of *half-timbering*, so as to distinguish it from the Scandinavian methods which I have described, and which our ancestors would gladly have adopted but for the absence of great fir woods and pine forests. Indeed, pine and fir were imported in the thirteenth century, but only in sufficient quantities to make wainscots for important halls.

But although English trees were not friendly to complete timber-houses, a genius for compromise invented other modes of construction, and post-and-pan buildings were put up in all parts of the country. The simplest style, as in cottages on manor farms, had a simple technique. The gable ends were made with two pairs of bent trees braced together by strong tie-beams. From top to top of each gable a ridge-tree was fastened securely. The tie-beams which braced the *crucks* (*i.e.*, the two trees forming each gable-end) were lengthened outwardly, so that they might be equal in length to the base of the arched opening made by the

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crucks. "Upon the top, or at the ends, of these extended tie-beams, long beams known as *pans* or *pons* were laid, and then the rafters were put between the pans and the ridge-tree. Finally a side wall was built from the ground as far upwards as the pan, so that the pan rested on the top of this wall."* As soon as the wooden skeleton or framework was complete, and hoisted up into position on the site, the roof was thatched with reeds or heather, and the walls were finished, plaster being applied over a webbing of upright posts and interlacing wattles or osiers. This work was known as wattle and daub, or stud and mud, or clam staff and daub. It often happened that after the wattle and daub had perished, new walls were built around the old timber skeleton, sometimes of stone, sometimes of brick; this practice, too, is still to be met with now here and there, as in Gloucestershire, and along the west coast of Lancashire; and so a wooden framework is often very much older than the external walls. In many cottages which from outside set us thinking of my lord the Jerry-Builder, we may find quaint rooms charmed with a ripe old age. On this point, see S. O. Addy, chapter 2.

Again, in several books published by Mr. B. T. Batsford, London, you can read what Mr. Ould and Mr. E. Guy Dawber have to say about England's historic half-timber homes, so stalwart and so patterned in Lancashire and Cheshire, but becoming more delicate in niceties of technique as we journey through the rich sweet pastures of the midlands, onward to the home counties around London, the brain centre of progress. Kentish woodwork has long been noted for its refinement, and some critics speak of French influence; but I am ready to hold, against all-comers, that English craftsmanship at its finest is unmatched elsewhere in Europe.

For the rest, the timbering outside was usually tarred or painted black, as a protection against wet and decay; and the contrast between this dark colour and the white plaster was, and is now, cheery and hospitable, more so, perhaps, than the tender red used on the framework of German timber-houses. In England the plaster was sometimes impressed with patterns;

*S. O. Addy's "Evolution of the English House," pp. 29, 30.

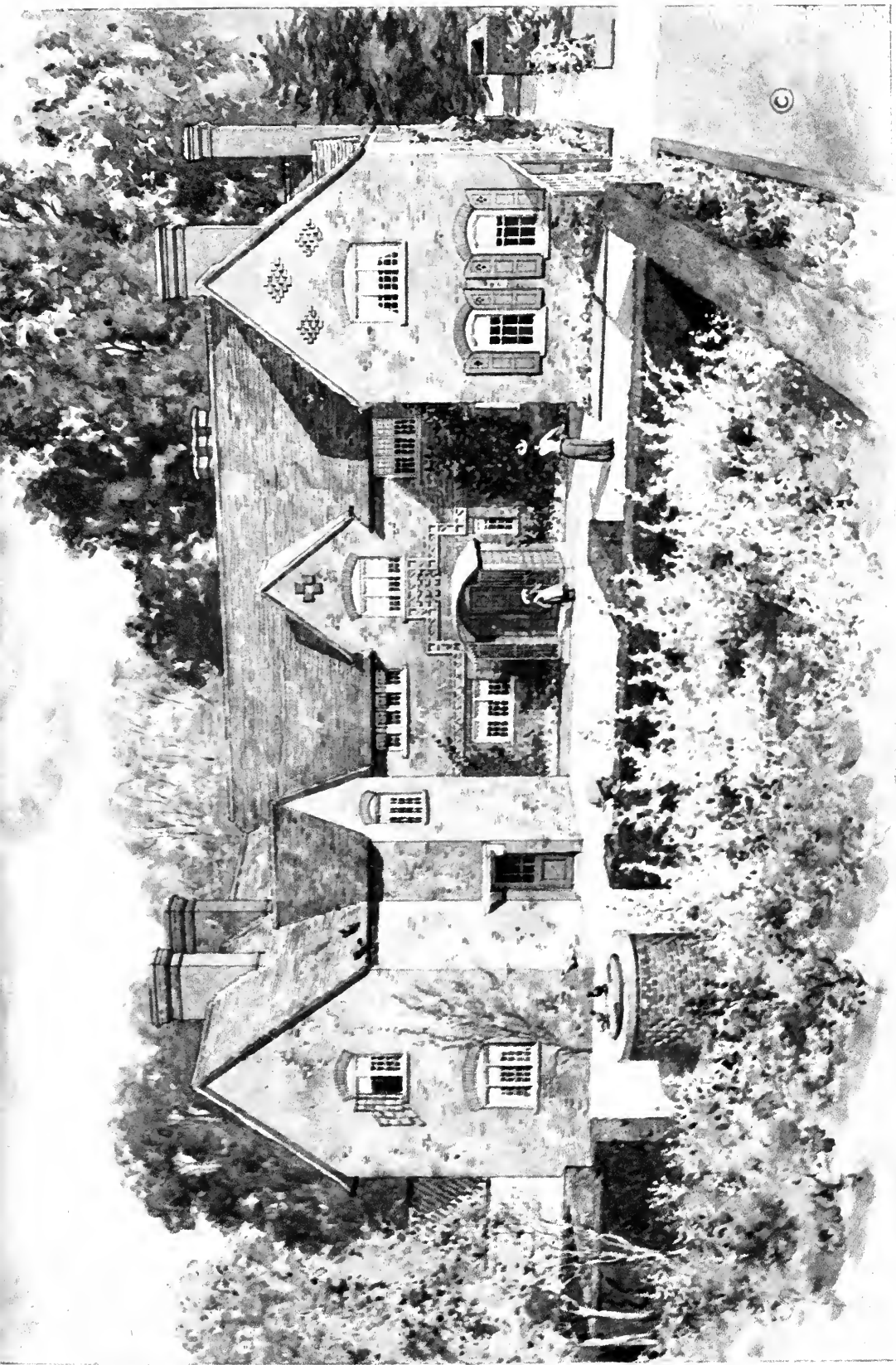
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usually it was whitewashed, but gayer tints were not unknown. Barge boards, window frames, brackets and the woodwork around doors, were often carved in a very intricate and gracious manner; and this custom, were it revived to-day, would put some blood of thoroughness into the anæmic system of trade-union labour.

But there are two warnings to be given here. Timber-nogging is a special form of building and needs a special training, so that you must choose an architect who has studied its traditions and its technique, like Mr. Ould, Mr. E. Guy Dawber, Mr. Detmar Blow, Mr. John Cash, and Mr. Gerald C. Horsley. Remember, too, that your choice of materials for walls should be guided, not by preconceptions of taste, but by the locality in which you live, in order that your house may be native to its neighbourhood. Also, let the materials be few in number. Do not put a gable of half-timbered work into a house built of stone and slate, or of bricks and tiles, for example; though anachronisms of that kind have been advocated, and still are recommended, now and again. Beware, too, of the "faked" half-timbered work, which consists in a painted imitation of posts and beams on a plastered house the real construction of which is of brick.

As a transition from wood-and-plaster walls to those of good solid stone, let us note here that in ancient architecture—the Greek, for example, and the Indian—details of wood construction were often copied and handed on by masons and sculptors, the forms of useful things outliving by many ages their function, not unlike the rudimentary organs in animals.

Still more interesting, however, are those forms in architecture which are common to wood and stone, as in the case of pillars to hold up a porch, a gallery, or a balcony or a vault; and there is an old-English type of gallery which would be very welcome now, for it is open at one side to the fresh air that circulates around a house, and would thus serve for open-air sleeping as well as for use by day. In Lord Bacon's Essay, "Of Building," mention is made of a fine inner court for private lodgings on both sides, and the ends for private galleries. "Upon the ground storey," says he, "a fair gallery open upon pillars;



HOUSE NEAR WINCHFELD, HANTS.

Ernest Newton, Architect, London

THE DRAWING BY T. HAMILTON CRAWFORD

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and upon the third storey likewise an open gallery upon pillars, to take the prospect and freshness of the garden." It is as if a specialist doctor were talking to us now in Harley Street. Bacon, indeed, in his fondness for pure air is surprisingly modern ; and his open galleries became the pride of English houses and taverns. We have to connect them, among other things, with the youth of the English drama, when tavern courtyards were theatres, and the well-to-do looked down from the galleries into the pit and stage. The galleries were charming as well as serviceable. Are they extinct ? Cannot they be revived ? Let us remember Bacon's phrase : " A fair gallery open upon pillars . . . to take the prospect and freshness of the garden." Our wee balconies are trivial and weak. Let us have something finer !

Specialists divide building stones into three kinds :

(1) Those which can be hewn into any shape you wish to form. They have long been described as freestones. The Oolite quarries of the Cotswold district belong to this class, and we owe to them excellent houses. There are few better stones for domestic architecture. The famous Portland stone is better ; it bleaches well, and its greyish white, under certain atmospheric conditions, as in London, gets beautifully mottled, for the black stain deposited by smoke and fog looks rich and attractive. Portland stone may be called London's marble ; and the black deposit is London's own moss. The one drawback to the use of Portland stone is that it helps our rigid masons to get hard angles, mathematically true and aggressive ; but, luckily, this defect passes away after a time, as Portland stone decays a little in town air, and this softens the hard-cut arrises and the contours of moulded work.

(2) Stones which can be polished as well as hewn, like marble, and like granite.

(3) Those which are useless for cutting, and have to be chipped to a broken, rough surface, as in the case of flints, pebbles, igneous rocks, and the waste from cut marble and granite and freestone.

The first kind is by far the most valuable for household work, because of the ease with which they can be cut into square

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forms having a various texture and surface ; to be used either in solid blocks or as veneer over bricks or over rough stonework. Marble is not at all likely to have a vogue in England. Indoors, when employed for lining the walls of great rooms, it looks chilly and feels cold to the touch ; and out-of-doors, as in the Marble Arch, it has been a quite ignoble failure, losing its own rich qualities, and assuming a dinginess which polished concrete would get at a cost infinitely lower. The air of English towns, unclean, wet, and corrosive, clings to marble as tenaciously as it does to window panes ; and although buildings may be cleaned outside with jets of steam, marble would have to be polished up after each washing, and it is not worth that expense in England, seeing that Portland stone gives a better effect.

The behaviour of building stones under various atmospheric trials being of interest to laymen, here are a few facts taken from a lecture by Mr. R. Boyle.* The Permian red sandstones from the south of Scotland withstand the Glasgow atmosphere best. In them the cementing medium is mostly iron peroxide, by which the red colour is produced. At Glasgow, as a rule, a top slope should be given to edges that project, as in cornices, string courses, and mouldings ; and, in the case of some stones, should be initially coated with a preservative, such as oil paint. A cementing material of silica is the best for the Glasgow atmosphere, and one of carbonates the worst. Test facts are invaluable, and these collected by Mr. Boyle must apply to any town in Great Britain having the same industrial smoke as Glasgow. In country places the problem is simpler, for we have only to choose the best local stones.

But in what way are the best stones to be chosen ? Some writers say that the primary test is the microscopic examination of a thin slice ; and they speak also of crushing tests. Yet buildings which have stood for two thousand years owe nothing to microscopic tests. Such near-sighted examination may be clever, but it has no advantage over ordinary experience and observation. It is easy to see how stones behave under varying

* The paper was read at the Glasgow University Geological Society, Feb. 18th, 1909.

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conditions of atmosphere ; and nature proves to us in her piled-up rocks and quarries that all her stones bear their own weight, seeing that the under and lowest ones are not crushed by those which tower above them. Sandstone bears sandstone and marble bears marble ; and architects of old noticed these things in nature, and set little store by artificial crushing tests. Atkinson says, for instance :

“An eminent French architect, it is said, in order to judge of the goodness of stones, employed drills and weights. A stone that required the greatest labour to drill a hole in it, and the greatest weight to compress it, he considered as possessing the best quality for building ; but this theory is false, for the weight of a building is seldom found so great as to compress the stones. In this country we have stones of the most durable kind, which are often very soft. There is a stone at Castle Eden, in the county of Durham, which may be worked with a carpenter’s plane ; and the Ketton stone, in Rutlandshire, is so soft and porous that it can be cut with the same saws as those used for timber ; yet both these kinds are as durable as Portland stone.”*

Note the Englishman’s old belief in the common sense of experience. French architects, if they like, may crush by artificial means stones which stood unharmed for immemorial years in a quarry, but Atkinson wants commonplace results and ordinary observation. He says, for instance :

“The most porous stone, if it does not imbibe water, and will stand the weather, has a great advantage over the heavier kinds, as it is a much better non-conductor of heat and cold. There is a very hard black Whinstone, much used about Perth in Scotland, but . . . being a great conductor of cold, it has serious disadvantages. On the inside of houses built with it, plaster will not stand.” “When the plaster becomes cold, it condenses and absorbs the moisture of the interior air ; and by means of the frost, which penetrates the walls, the plaster is soon destroyed.”

Atkinson did not pretend to be a man of science : he was just a collector of observed facts, like all his predecessors ; and

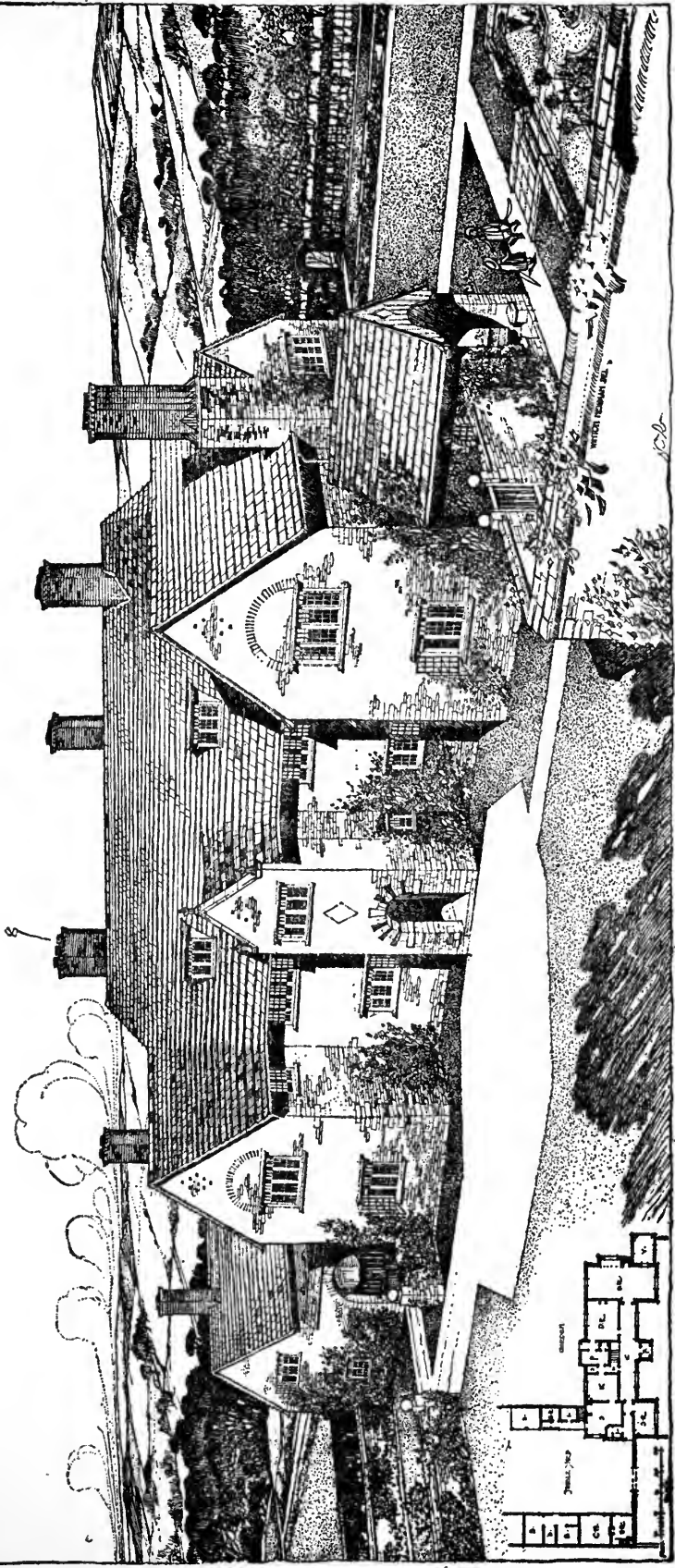
* Atkinson’s “Cottage Architecture,” 1805, pages 11, 12.

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that is what *you* should be in your attitude to building stones and other architectural materials. You can note, just as they did, that any porous stone which is fit for house architecture gathers moss and lichens, and that these growths help to keep the cold of winter from passing through walls. You can learn, too, as the old builders did, that when exterior walls are not solid all through, but have in them a hollow space, they are well fitted to keep out damp and cold, because the air shut up in the cavity is among the best non-conductors of heat and cold, and it breaks the leakage of damp through bricks, etc. Stevenson points out that in the old half-timbered houses there was usually an air-space in the walls, formed by a surface of plaster on laths both outside and inside the wooden framework. And Atkinson recommends for brick cottages and small houses a wall fourteen inches thick, the width of two bricks, each four inches, *plus* a cavity of six inches in the middle. But such double walls must not be tied together by absorbent bricks or stones, because damp would pass through them and be concentrated in spots on the inner wall. Atkinson forgot this point. He mentions brick ties without saying that they must be damp-proof. He adds that the cavity could be filled up with gravel bound together by a mixture of quick-lime and water; only, no more lime should be slacked than can be used at once, because quick-lime soon loses a great deal of its cementing quality. A wall of this kind, in Atkinson's time, was much cheaper than solid brick-work, and, if properly made, was exceedingly strong. Further, as sounds are apt to travel erratically inside hollow walls, the cement and gravel, in filling the cavity, gave noise-proof qualities.

It is always well to consider old methods and to see how they tally with our own experience. We and they are at one in many respects. Stevenson notes, for example, that a wall of freestone, though it absorbs some moisture, rarely absorbs enough to let the wet pass through it, and is safer in this respect than a wall of hard non-porous stone, in which damp is sucked in through the joints. "Mere thickness will not keep such a wall dry, on the principle that if you give a whole sugar-loaf enough

BIBSWORTH, WORCESTERSHIRE.
 E. GUY DAWBER, ARCHITECT.



VIEW OF BIBSWORTH, WORCESTERSHIRE

E. Guy Dawber, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

REPRODUCED FROM A DRAWING BY W. NEWMAN

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water, it will absorb it as a small lump does. In a castle lately built in Ireland, walls six feet thick were found to let the damp through them, and probably may never dry. The damp must be kept from getting into them at all, by a coating of cement or roughcast, or by laying the stones so that the rain falls from their outer surface as off a shaggy coat ; or a hollow space must be left in them, so that damp cannot come to the inside. . . . The inner wall is usually only half a brick thick, so as to leave the wall as thick as possible outside the air space."

Yet hollows inside walls and between the battening on walls have drawbacks, because they are liked by mice and rats, whose patterings to and fro account for a good many ghost stories, and have a disturbing effect on nervous persons. Damp-proof solidity is the ideal to be aimed at, accompanied by sound-resisting qualities ; and how is that combination of good things to be got ? —got, that is to say, at a moderate cost in money ? A difficult question indeed ! Concrete is non-absorbent, but it conducts sound ; and if we use with it a steel-framework how are we to stop noises from travelling up and down the metal ? Wood, too, is so very troublesome as a conductor of noise, that in a home the passage of sound along joints and beams ought to be interrupted as often as possible by disconnecting air-spaces or by wads of thick felt. The nearest I can get to this problem of the ideal wall, proof against damp, cold, heat and sound, is in the combined application of three undisputed facts :—

(1) Homogeneous materials favour sound, while heterogeneous do not. They "deafen" walls.

(2) Hollows between solid walls convey sounds, and sometimes carry them to distant parts of a house ; but they keep out cold and moisture, making a home warm and dry in winter and cool in summer.

(3) Concrete, a conductor of sound, is proof against damp.

We have now to apply the first principle to the other two, as Atkinson did when he filled hollow walls with cement and gravel. Or suppose the outside material be stone and the inside brick, with a cavity filled up with sand, or sawdust, or gravel-concrete. Add to this a coating of cement over the inside

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surface of brick, and we get a wall, not only non-homogeneous, but as water-proof as need be.

What points ought to be remembered concerning bricks? To answer this question, we must go to our Eastern counties, where a want of stone led to a frequent use of bricks, even at early periods; bricks made in the Roman fashion, large, flat and thin, and having a close resemblance to tiles.

When we turn to the earliest English home in which English bricks have survived to our own days, Little Wenham Hall, Essex, *tempus* Henry III. (about 1260), we find walls wherein layers of stone and flints are mingled with brick bands. The bricks, too, are very interesting, some having a general resemblance to the Roman, while others are nearer in shape to our own, though happily not so thick. They vary a good deal in colour; the dominant tint is paler than in ordinary red bricks, but rich in comparison with common Suffolk bricks.

Both colour and size have, of course, a great architectural value; and as soon as we come to the great times of English brickwork, running on from the fourteenth century to about the middle of the eighteenth, we meet with valuable hints in beautiful examples. There is genuine progress while the art of brick-making does not go too far from the Roman ideals of thickness and good colour. The question of thickness has great importance because thin bricks are easier to burn well and they add both scale and texture to walls; whereas thick ones invite us to count their courses, so their effect has a dwindling influence on the dignity of a building. At Little Wenham Hall the bricks are two inches and a quarter thick; in after times three inches became the standard; while to-day, the stereotyped rule is three and a half inches. Now this excess of half an inch, multiplied by the number of courses laid in horizontal bands, disfigures and dwarfs a wall, and marks the difference between foolish work and fine craft. Both Dutchmen and Frenchmen are wiser than we, their bricks being thinner than ours and shorter too.

In colour and texture, also, there has been a deplorable falling-off in quality, as anyone may learn by contrasting our machine-made, wire-cut bricks with the triumphs of true art

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to be seen at Hampton Court, where red-brick walls of two colours glow harmoniously in all weather. Those belonging to the Tudor part, Wolsey's buildings, have a ripe rich plum-tint rarely now achieved, while the Classic part built by Wren for Dutch William is a gladdening orange red, that contrasts both gaily and charmingly with the grey-white dressings of Portland stone. When perfect brick walls are set off by architectural features of freestone, a house has a delightful homeliness ; only, of course, the contrast between the materials *must sing*, and not be insipid and pale-faced : a point too often forgotten to-day. At Sutton Park, near Guildford, Surrey, a noble Tudor house, the brick walls have patterns in black, set off by moulded cream-tinted bricks in door and window dressings.

Despite these fine examples the traditions of English brick-work became offensive to the eighteenth century taste, and particularly to the effete maccaronies of style, followers of Capability Brown and Repton. A detestation for colour was the result. Bricks were condemned as too "full-blooded," even too "apoplectic ;" that is why they were "doctored"—either by burning sulphur with the clay, turning them a dull and sickly yellowish white, or by mixing a small quantity of chalk and water with the clay, which produced a light yellow bile-tint ; and these anæmic horrors being dearer than good red bricks, they were seldom used for any work not considered "chaste." This bad fashion descended from the Reptons to ordinary builders, who, in London, clung to it through the whole Victorian period, when a dismal town architecture was produced with yellowy and stone-tinted bricks, often ill-burnt and soft. Nothing was too bad to be outside the limits of good taste. Even Suffolk bricks, a little heavy and dull in colour, were laid between black mortar, so that their purple effect might be harsh and abominable. Even the common stock bricks made of London clay, which burn to a brown or buff tint, were made into houses having often the gloom of Victorian mutes, when it would have been so easy to use them in a very pleasant old-time manner, mingled with red bricks for moulded cornices and for window dressings.

As to our own time, I dare not say what I feel and think ;

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for the brick trades, too much supported by their unions, have a warlike reputation ; so Mr. Bidlake shall speak for me :

“The aim of every brick manufacturer now-a-days is to produce bricks as exact in shape, as sharp in arris, as smooth in surface, as uniform in colour, and as bright a red as it is possible to make them ; and every bricklayer is taught that the best facework is the most accurately laid and the most perfectly uniform in colour ; and to attain this ideal the bricks will often be carefully picked over and those rejected which vary in only a slight degree from the standard red. Consider also the detestable method of tuck-pointing in white mortar and in black. . . . Surely the atmosphere of the smokiest town is not enough excuse for brickwork such as this ; and it is absolutely certain that a cottage or a country home is ruined by it.”

What remedy, then ? There is only one cure for disorders in the household arts ; it is technical education, a knowledge of the difference between good work and bad ; for bad work in the domestic arts and crafts is certain to be done under modern conditions when the buying public is uncritical. Teach the people to criticize with truth, and the supply of household things will improve with the judgment and taste shown by purchasers.

That is why all facts concerning the use of materials are invaluable to-day. I have given you many about bricks and their use and qualities, and not one is at all hard to remember or to apply. Other hints may be borrowed from foreign countries ; as, for example, from Italian Gothic, in which many beautiful effects were obtained by the use of bricks having on their surface quiet patterns ; or you can study the French brick houses of the sixteenth century and note the skill with which bricks of different colours are combined together, usually in a diagonal diaper with lines of darker bricks. The Romans, too, and our own early genius for art, loved contrasts between pale red walls and deeper-tinted cornices and mouldings ; the secret of success here being precisely the same as that in marquetry and inlaid furniture, where colours ought never to be in very sharp contrasts, but rich and peaceful, having pretty much the same tone value,

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so that they lie quite flat, *on the same plane* ; *i.e.*, at the same distance from the eye.

Texture and colour will owe much of their combined effect to the way in which you decide to have the bricks laid. Excellent mortar must be used for wide joints, or damp will penetrate through it and them ; or perhaps you will choose the "gauged" technique, which consists in rubbing down bricks to a regular smoothness, so that they fit together with joints as fine-set as a knife-edge. Stevenson says that thin white joints give a deeper and richer colour to the massed effect, making an excellent contrast with ordinary brickwork put in juxtaposition. But the real worth of a criticism is that it invites you to verify it with your own eyesight and judgment ; and much helpful entertainment can be got by reading the brick walls of English homes.

In Norfolk, for example, scattered here and there, are some good old examples of herring-bone patterns made with bricks built into timber-framed cottages ; and the use of brickwork in post-and-pan houses may be studied in other parts of England, as in Berkshire, every now and then. Beautiful chimneys of moulded brick, from the fifteenth century onward, give alertness and charm to many homes, and often you will be struck by the difference between two distinct methods of building bricks into house walls. The earlier of the two is known as the old English bond ; and its bricks in each course are laid alternately *header and stretcher* ; that is to say, showing alternately the end or head and the long side face. The later method is called the Flemish bond ; it came to England in the time of William the Third ; and its bricks form alternate courses of headers and stretchers ; that is, a whole course of ends or heads followed by a whole course of long side faces.

If in your neighbourhood you cannot get bricks that are sufficiently weather-tight, you will choose, no doubt, to have the outside walls covered with roughcast, for good roughcast, with a lively rugged texture, and neither cold-white nor too yellowish in colour, has the sanction of tradition and taste for country homes, free from the collecting dirt of towns. Sometimes, as in Kent, it was accompanied by patterned pebble-work forming

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a sort of geometrical frieze under the eaves, in the cool shadow thrown by a projecting roof ; but all designs on external walls are hard to manage with complete success ; it is a case of hit or miss ; and in architecture one hesitates "to shoot at rovers," to make risky experiments. In some old French houses you may have noticed examples of bad taste in this particular, as when a vine in modelled plaster trials up the façade of a white-washed house into the gable ; as if Nature did not grow creeping plants in France. More fortunate by far is the decorative pattern-work of slates to be seen here and there in Brittany, giving charm, in humbler rustic dwellings, to dormer windows and gables. But French slates are pleasant in colour and very delicate in quality of surface, so that they make a more welcome cover for a wall than do our hard purple varieties. It is better for us to keep loyal to our tile-hung walls, with their exquisite weathering of moss and fungi.

There has been much talk in our time about external effects of colour in house architecture, and some experts have tried to persuade us that variously tinted tiles and terra-cotta may be used with a gay sobriety of charm. Is that possible ? Such chromatic architecture is not at peace with British landscapes ; and in towns—setting aside the moist, soot-laden air and the deposits of corroding dirt—all attempts at a many-tinted type of building are copied at once by restaurants and public houses, which, like *demi-mondaines*, put an ignoble swagger into all fashions.

The late E. M. Barry, R.A., held that the safest colour-agents for the exterior walls of town houses were glazed bricks—employed with great care as an enrichment : and he may have been right. They seem to be managed with less danger than accompanies the use of terra-cotta, though white terra-cotta toned with yellow goes well with red brick ; and they do not give to solid walls a shallow, unsubstantial look, such as may be noted in facework of glazed tiles and Carrara ware. Finally, the management of colours needs a good eye for colour, and that is the rarest thing in art, even among painters of distinction.

So, when we hear talk about the glories of polychrome effects in building materials, let us not be carried away by enthusiasm. The magic of a long patience will help us much more. The

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colour we need is that which our forbears got with brick and stone, and with grey flint walls enriched by dressings of cut brick ; or with some other simple contrast between common materials. Even their rubbish masonry—their coarse rubble-work and their walls of Kentish ragstone—had colour and charm ; for it was a custom to take pains with joy, so odds and ends of stone and pebble were put together in a bold mosaic, the mortar holding them neatly and cleanly, not running as a smudge over the surface. And we can be as ably thorough as the old craftsmen if we are not incurably their inferiors.

We have now considered the shell of our house, the foundation, and the roof, and the walls ; but, before passing on to another chapter, let us note the main principle underlying the work thus far. It is this : that all things in true architecture must serve their purpose in a visible and satisfying manner. It is not enough that they should be fit for their office ; they must *look* convincingly right ; and in this architecture differs from the science of engineering, which gives little attention to eye criticism.

The engineer has one aim—utility *plus* science and mathematical calculation ; the architect has a different aim—utility *plus* art and beauty ; and their rivalry to-day arises from the fact that the public has an aim different from both—utility *plus* cheapness. How to reconcile these hostile aims—how to equalize the rule of architecture, engineering, and public opinion—is the most national question of the hour.

For a moment the engineer bids fair to oust the architect. His steel framework has passed from shops into flats and thence into private houses ; and now the historic building materials seem to be threatened by reinforced concrete. Still, when new ideas come along, the right attitude is one of fair and slow examination, for they may help us to follow a great precept in the wisdom of Solomon :

“ Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.”

In the meantime, however, let us remember that all true art is a sacrifice, a patient offering by honest toilers to a cause deemed wise and noble.

CHAPTER SIX

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : WINDOWS AND DOORS

“Observation is the soul of knowledge.”—*Hugo*.

Among civilized peoples the faculty of seeing with attention is rare, partly because they are more concerned with themselves and their projects than with external facts, and partly because that which is looked at daily—that which is familiar—is not really seen, does not impress the mind, unless we find in it something hitherto unobserved, such as the life of rapid change called history, or the beauty of slow change called art. Yet parents forget this, and let their children grow up without knowing those very things which appeal to them every day and all day long, household things, for example, like doors and windows. So the eye rests upon all things but *sees* very few. That is the penalty of custom, which dulls observation, and sends reason to sleep.

One mishap that dulls observation and hinders the progress of art and thought among the people is the fact that our newspaper press prints huge numbers of scattered ideas and blurs them all daily in the public mind. To-day's newspapers weaken and confuse the impressions left in the memory by yesterday's; nothing seems to matter when the hour's history of the world is related as news having the same importance in all its innumerable items,

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a murder receiving as much transitory comment as the loss of 10,000 lives in an earthquake, or a cricket match asking for as much momentary alarm as the condition of India ; and so, as we read for the moment only and without any feeling for the rational perspective of events, we remember dimly, vaguely ; and very often we find that even the latest news gets cold and stale in the telling.

The national mind is numbed and enfeebled by all this straining after excitement ; and our civilization would pass away like the news of last year were it not upheld by the quiet folk of genius, who keep away from the daily carnival of news that shrieks for our pence and ha'pence from breakfast to bedtime.

What chance, then, has the public to be attracted by the ideals of thought and of art ? What quiet work of any useful sort can compete with success against thousands of journals ? Windows indeed, and doors ! Are windows as attractive to the public mind as was the earthquake of Messina ? and who is moved to-day by that disaster ? How many facts about it are remembered ? Since we suffer so much from knowledge-quakes, it is a duty to oppose journalism, the greatest of all dangers at the present time.

Ruskin's method of attack was to provoke opposition or to startle his readers with paradoxes and exaggerations ; and then, having won attention, he tried rambling and persuasive arguments. Once, in a lecture at Edinburgh, he wished to stir up indignation against the routine ugliness of modern windows and doorways. But how was he to do that ? His theme was not more promising than the ugliness of bulldogs, which everybody accepted as a matter of course. Still, Ruskin was not to be nonplussed. He had studied Edinburgh, he knew the city's architecture ; and if he, after a little historic flattery, shot a few barbed arrows into the civic pride of the Edinburgh folk, a lively beginning would be made, surely. After that he would not read his paper into deaf ears. Some enemies would be made for life, perhaps, but in the cause of the nation's homes risks must be run. So, after a most charmingly discreet introduction, he began to prepare his arrows.

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The citizens of Edinburgh were not to think that they could have good architecture merely by paying for it. It was not by subscribing liberally for a large building once in fifty years that they could call up architects and inspirations. It was only by active and sympathetic attention to the domestic and everyday work that they could educate themselves to the feeling, and their builders to the doing, of architecture fit to help the great scenery around their city. It did not matter how many beautiful buildings they possessed, when these were not supported by, and in harmony with, the private houses of the town. Besides, architecture had ever been an art for all folk to learn, because all had ever been concerned with it ; and its principles being simple, there was no excuse for not being acquainted with its primary rules, any more than for ignorance of grammar and of spelling, two sciences more difficult by far.

Yet, Edinburgh was not to be blamed if she could not feel interested about architecture ; if she did not like it, if it bored her. For indeed, said Ruskin, "about such architecture as is built now-a-days, no mortal ever did or could care." None wished to hear the same thing over and over again, so why should we want to *see* the same thing over and over again, were that thing even the best in the world and the most beautiful ?

"Now you all know the kind of window which you build usually in Edinburgh : here is an example of the head of one, a massy lintel of a single stone, laid across from side to side, with bold square-cut jambs—in fact, the simplest form it is possible to build. It is by no means a bad form ; on the contrary, it is very manly and vigorous, and has a certain dignity in its utter refusal of ornament. But I cannot say it is entertaining. How many windows precisely of this form do you suppose there are in the New Town of Edinburgh ? I have not counted them all through the town, but I counted them this morning along this very Queen Street, in which your Hall is ; and on the one side of that street, there are of these windows, absolutely similar to this example, and altogether devoid of any relief by decoration, six hundred and seventy-eight, . . . not counting any window which has mouldings. And your decorations are just as mono-

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tonous as your simplicities. How many Corinthian and Doric columns do you think there are in your banks, and post-offices, institutions, and I know not what else, one exactly like another? —and yet you expect to be interested. . . . You think you can put 150,000 square windows side by side in the same street, and still be interested by them. . . . You let your architects *do* the same thing over and over again for three centuries," forgetting how their "wasted stones have cost you no small part of your incomes."

Having fired these shots, Ruskin poured a little oil into the wounds. His listeners were not to be blamed; the wrong was not in them, but in those wicked folk called architects, who, to be sure, though they represent the ruling aims and needs of their time, are invariably blamed in private for all shortcomings, particularly after clients have insisted upon rash economies and silly compromises. But Ruskin had an irritated audience to soothe. Then he passed on to a different kind of galling truth. He went back six hundred years and chose a window from Oakham Castle, built in the very infancy of modern house architecture as distinguished from mediæval defensive building; a lovely window, too, with a couple of lights, and three graceful little shafts enriched at the sides by strings of tooth-ornament. Each light has a head of pointed masonry, but its opening is square at top, so that we have a contrast between a horizontal line and leaf-shaped bearing arches above it. You will not tell me that you have no pleasure in looking at this, said Ruskin; or that you could not, by any possibility, be charmed by the art which produced it; or that, if every window in your streets were of some such form, with perpetual change in their ornaments, you would pass up and down the street with as much indifference as now, when thousands of windows in a row are all precisely of the same pattern, up and down as dull as grammar would be to golf players on the links. And even when there is variety, as in Oxford Street, it is more often than not the variety of patchwork, not the diversity of ordered art obedient to a good general scheme. Style clashes with style, giving us, thrown together at haphazard, a jumbled history of architecture, not a

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bit more amusing than the dolorous monotony of Gower Street, or the more manly sameness of which Ruskin complained in Edinburgh.

But the main point is that, when riding on a 'bus, or walking in a street, you should study with your own eyes the eyes of architecture, the windows, so as to note in what ways they differ from the various subtlety of character and interest which Nature puts into all her work. In that one quality at least man's art should be like nature's, infinitely varied yet harmonious, and with character even in disfigured shapes. It is absurd for us to chatter about education and progress, if we have no faculty to know what is necessary to the aspect of our towns and of our country homes. There is a barbarism worse than that of savages ; it breeds slums in wealthy cities, and spreads over valuable lands hideous rows of houses which begin to fall into decay after three years of wear and tear.

Ruskin felt that profoundly ; and though he is not always a safe guide in architecture, yet his enthusiasm never fails to quicken thought and his mistakes provoke contradiction, which is healthy exercise. The joy he took in pointed windows and doorways was carried to excess, perhaps, being ecclesiastical rather than domestic, for the great periods of English household Gothic favoured square-headed windows and bold, square drip-stones that turned down at the sides, forming expressive eyebrows above the eyes of home architecture. But, for all that, pointed windows in a house are charming ; they have a vivacious look ; and arches, of course, are stronger as supports than flat lintels, which may be cracked by the weight of masonry above them. And it is often difficult, or at least expensive, to get stones large enough to form such lintels, while arches can be built with bricks or with mere fragments of stone, as in rubble workmanship. So there are practical considerations on the side of pointed windows, not to speak of the other good reasons, those of beauty and historic association.

But although pointed windows call back to memory the greatest times of church architecture, and by their form suggest one of the most frequent and beautiful shapes in nature, namely,

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the pointed arch terminating a leaf, there is no need for us to quarrel with windows of a different kind, tall and square-cut at top, as in houses designed by the brothers Adam, or long and mullioned, as often in Cotswold houses, or in noble bays, rising the full height of a building, as in some Tudor mansions. It was at this point that Ruskin went wrong ; dwelling with too much fervour on one type and style.

To sum up the qualities of a pointed shape for windows :

1. It is in accord with the heaven-directed ascent of Gothic architecture during the best periods in church building.

2. It is beautiful and it looks alert, vivacious, hopeful.

3. It is a form that carries superimposed weight without looking ungraceful or overburdened ; and

4. It is in pleasant contrast with the base of the window, the level window sill, which would be inconvenient if it were not flat, because we need the sill either to lean upon or to allow the window to open on to a balcony, and, besides that, there is in the sill no necessity for a pointed arch as a bearing form ; on the contrary, it would give an idea of weak support for the sides of the window, and on that account architects have rarely designed pointed sills.* But, of course, in this type of window, the square base has never the beauty and charm of the leaf-shaped head. It is just a necessary thing for use, and architects never call much attention to it, but put their finest embellishing work—sculpture, tracery, and mouldings—into the window-heads.

A window, then, is not merely a thing to be looked through, but a thing to be seen, studied, and thought about ; and if you turn to any good illustrated books on old-time house architecture, you will find that windows, the eyes of a home, receiving light and giving expressions of friendliness and beauty, are not a whit less interesting than human eyes, nor less varied over half-a-dozen centuries. And I think you will be particularly delighted with a type of window built during the fifteenth century, because in it a squared top, strongly framed by a dripstone, is relieved and beautified by pointed lights within it ; that is to say, the opening is right-angular, but mullions divide the aperture into

* See Ruskin's Lectures, page 29.

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lancet-shaped lights with feathered tops. Often these have transoms as well as mullions, and the lights below the transoms, like those up above, are arched and feathered. But, indeed, fifteenth-century architecture is brimful of useful hints, like its descendants of the next century, the Tudor home and the Elizabethan ; and here is a hint worth remembering : that architects of those times usually avoided very tall houses as being out of keeping with the sylvan charm of English landscape. This has been forgotten pretty often during the last fifty years, with the result that many fine country houses look like giants amid their environment, and have an imperious air or one of sheer insolence.

One form of English window, which came into vogue as early as the twelfth century, had seats on each side of the interior ; the wall was not built up all the way to the inner sill, leaving a stone bench on each side, and often space enough for a step or two into the room. This fashion, at a time when castle windows were very small, showed how eagerly women and children looked out from dim chambers over the sunlit country ; and that is why the fashion was continued very much later, when the size of windows grew larger and more cheery-looking. Is there a hint for us here ? Those windows-seats and their steps wait to be used again, the dust of many ages has not spoilt their hospitable invitation to the tired and the sick. And in some rooms, as in halls, it is amusing to step up to the window-seats. What is Nature doing in the country to-day ? What effects of light and shade has she prepared ? One feels as a gourmet feels when he puts on his spectacles and glances eagerly at the menu.

Perhaps you will disagree from me in this matter, and say that *all* windows now should have their sills within three feet nine inches from the floor level (see page 73) ; but no harm is ever done by suggesting a departure from accepted rules or customs, which are apt to degenerate into stereotyped repetitions of the very same thing. A window with steps and seats would be designed for a special purpose—namely, to give a far-reaching outlook over the countryside ; and as the room itself would be unusually high, the Spy Window would help to carry off the dead air rising constantly to the ceiling.

OUR HOMES

However, there is one old type of window concerning which we are all agreed ; it is the bay-window, introduced during the first truly domestic period of English architecture, the fifteenth century. Bay-windows, then, belong to the last mediæval phase of Gothic art, the Perpendicular style (falsely so called, as its main lines are horizontal rather than vertical). Inside a room they curve into recesses, and projecting outwards from a wall they give variety to the external design, and take forms which are sometimes semi-circular, and sometimes rectangular or polygonal. These belong to the best traditions ; the semi-circular are of later date and are less admirable as a rule. At first a bay-window was a sign of rank, a mark of distinction, for it was built not only in the great hall, but invariably at the dais end, where my lord sat with his family and guests ; and to this day, in all good examples, it has an air of hospitable authority. A bay-window, like a good host, should command respect with a genial dignity.

It is from that standpoint that our own bay-windows should be judged—and, as a rule, condemned, for they are generally feeble and debased copies of the old, weak in design and with a commercial simper in their cheap workmanship. Even when they are well-built and attractive, they are at standing odds with the real meaning of the word *bay*, a word of much importance in two kinds of English history, namely, architecture and husbandry. A bay meant a unit of measurement sixteen feet long or wide ; in houses built by the bay, it was sixteen feet long ; in the stall where the great yoke of oxen stood four abreast in the byre, it was sixteen feet wide ; and cottage homes, as well as straw and corn, were often sold by the bay. When, therefore, in old documents, you read of a house in two or three bays, you are to understand a house thirty-two or forty-eight feet long.

And a bay-window, originally, was something more than a recess : it was wide and big, in keeping with the unit of measurement, at least to a very marked extent ; it gave room enough for a large sideboard, or was by itself a real chamber, as in the Long Gallery at Haddon Hall, where great projecting bays, with stone-mullioned windows and jolly leaded panes, measure fifteen



NOWER HILL PINNER.
 SKETCH FOR ALTERATIONS.
 CECIL C. BREWER, ARCHT.

NOWER HILL, PINNER, SKETCH FOR ALTERATIONS. THE WALLS ARE ENTIRELY ROUGHCAST AND THE ROOFS COVERED WITH OLD HAND-MADE TILES. BEFORE THE ALTERATIONS THE HOUSE WAS OF NO DEFINITE CHARACTER, VARIOUS ENCREUSSEURS HAD BEEN BUILT FROM 1830 TO 1870, AND THE HOUSE PRESENTED A MIXTURE OF WORK IN BRICK, PLASTER, AND HALF-TIMBER, WITH A ROOFING PARTLY OF TILES AND PARTLY OF SLATES.

Cecil C. Brewer, Architect, London

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : WINDOWS AND DOORS

feet by twelve feet. These, then, are genuine *bay*-windows, unlike our own dwindled copies. And this old question of ample size, of spacious freedom indoors, touches that which we value most—the ruling spirit that colonises ; for never can such greatness be upheld by mean little homes. Yet somehow, in many ways, during the last fifty years, there has been a steadily diminishing pride in the ease and freedom that large rooms impart ; small rooms have been preferred to a fewer number of a big size ; and speculators have built those cramped suburbs and dire back streets which hurt and astonished the editors who attended the Imperial Press Conference, and who, but for the historic country homes, would not have understood Old England, the maker of colonies, who gemmed the far-off seas with repetitions of herself. So, altogether, the first bay-windows are symbols of what we now need in most of our modern houses and flats—size, spaciousness, a freedom from walls so close to us that they cramp our actions and develop in us puny habits.

Then, as to the designing of bay-windows, you will remember the noble examples at Compton Wynyates, Haddon Hall, and the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. There is no need for us to copy details ; but there is urgent need that we should recatch and retain the ample spirit of the old architecture. *That* is enduring and national, like the spirit of Shakespeare. But we are, of course, hindered by the fact that we need a law to prevent builders from doing domestic work unassisted by competent architects.

Then, and only then, we shall get in our ordinary homes the best value for the money we spend on rent ; for remember, please, that every feature in architectural construction is a thing of use, and we ought to get from it a full measure of its utility. A bay-window, for instance, had its origin not merely in a liking for external beauty ; it grew from *within* the house and gave expression to a wish to enlarge rooms ; and this wish being imperative to-day, particularly in towns, it is a sin to form bay-windows which are shallow, inadequate makeshifts.

Note, too, in this connection, that in houses which cannot afford the expense of ornaments or mouldings, we have to depend for our effect on the skill with which plain windows and simple

OUR HOMES

doors are designed and treated, so that their disposition and their proportion may give us beauty and dignity; and it is precisely here that the more creditable types of suburban house, as at Golder's Green, are far behind the cottage architecture of the past, as in the Cotswold district. When we try now to do simple good work, as at Golder's Green, we are very apt to be "arty," pretentious in a weak manner, forgetting that the best qualities in art are those which retire from the eye and have to be sought, like violets. In the treatment of Gothic features, like bay-windows and gables, suburban buildings are rarely successful. It is a thousand pities, because our finest traditions in window-design are of Gothic origin and descent.

Indeed, J. J. Stevenson complained with truth that Classic architects in England, deriving their style from Greek and Roman temples, accepted windows with reluctance, as "accidents or necessary evils" in a temple-like design; and although there are in England thousands of Classic windows treated with care and taste, they have never the poetry and charm of the best Gothic examples, which were evolved with the style itself and in happy accord with social needs and climatic conditions. The aim of Gothic builders was to keep the unity of their wall surface; and that is why their windows were joined to the solid masonry by mullions, transoms, tracery, and thick glass fixed in visible supports of lead. No bird ever flew against such windows in the belief that they were open holes. Mark now the difference in Classic architecture, which dwells on the contrast between solid and void, and obtains effect by means of it, for the windows are deeply recessed, and have around them as much shadow as possible. A great deal of light is lost, of course; and the thickness of wall outside the glass blocks from us side views of scenery, so that we have to look straight ahead, which is not often a pleasant entertainment in streets. This, you will note, is quite different from Gothic, which shows *inside* a house what bulk of wall separates us from winter weather and summer heat. In public buildings the shadow within deeply recessed windows may be right, perhaps; but for ordinary homes, no doubt, a more satisfactory beauty is obtained when windows are treated reason-

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE : WINDOWS AND DOORS

ably, not as openings without glass, but as integral parts of the wall surface enclosing our rooms. J. J. Stevenson writes admirably on this question, vol. ii., pp. 194-5 ; but your best authority will be your own application of these criticisms to the houses you see about you.

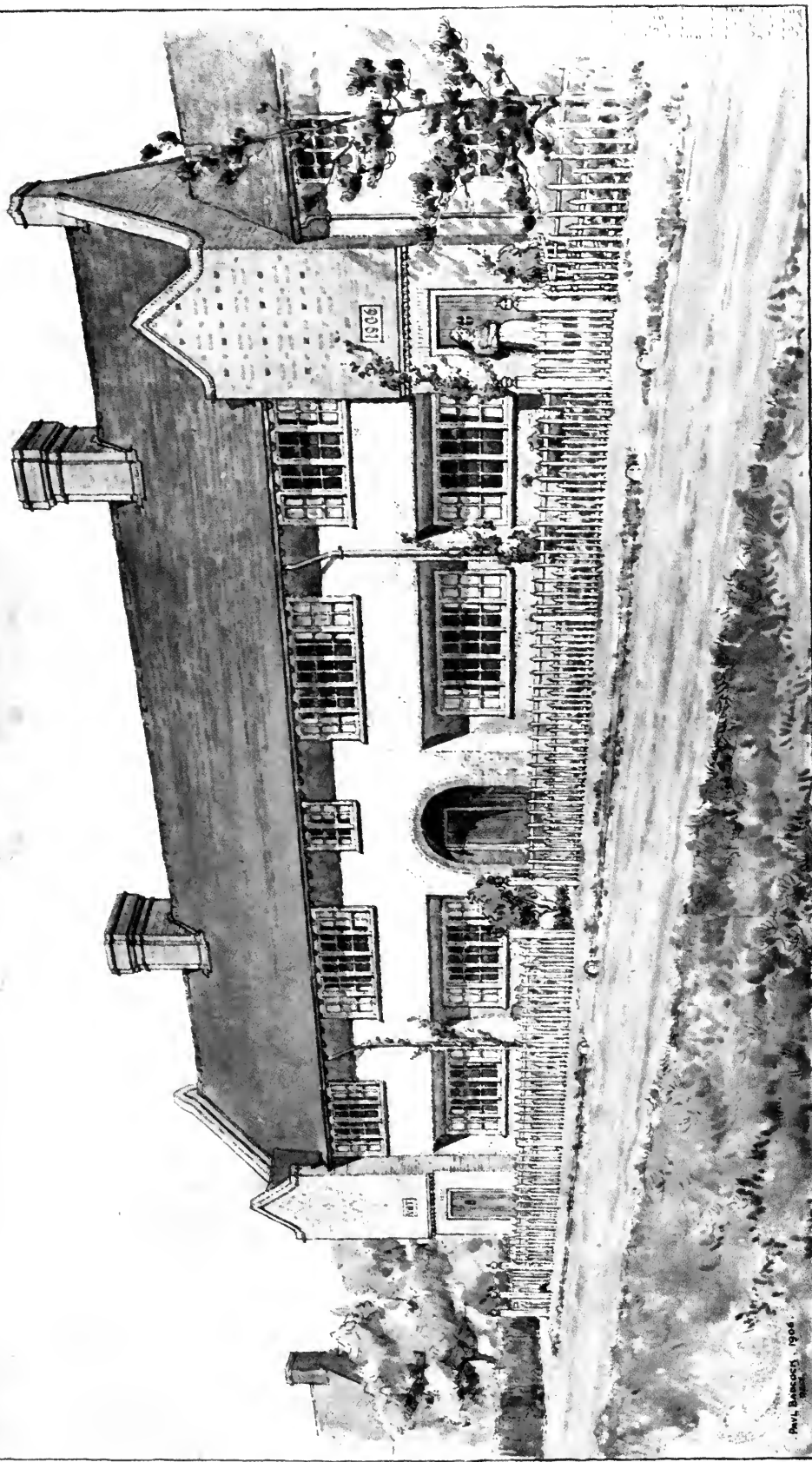
As for doors, how often, in ordinary houses, do they receive enough thought to-day ? Who would think that they are things to be proud of, since their duty is to protect homes and yet be friendly looking ? Why, then, do we put into them less design and less sympathy than is found in the simplest toy sold for a penny in the shops ? There are streets after streets in which all the doors are so much alike that residents don't know their own, but are guided by the postal numbers, or by some distinctive colour on the woodwork, pale bright green being a favourite, somehow. Even some architects at times recommended that colour, and explain their choice by a reference to nature's greens, quite forgetting not only that nature's greens are greyed by atmosphere, but that, though beautiful, they are feared by painters, who with their pigments cannot get a grey brilliance that unites vivid pale greens into a cool, sweet harmony. Dark greens are often safe and helpful in decorative work, and some artists use them to paint doors, while others prefer chocolate colour. One day, perhaps, we shall have doors of unpainted wood.

But it is in the design of doorways and doors that we must ask for a general improvement. I have just been looking once again through a dozen illustrated volumes on old-time houses, and once again I am amazed by the thought and feeling which the entrance into homes used to receive as a matter of course. In side streets off the Strand, for example, where the Hotel Cecil now is, there were streets in which every doorway differed from its neighbour, and all were beautiful. As a lad, when a student at the Slade School of Art under Professor Le Gros, I knew them well, and it is pleasant to find that J. J. Stevenson knew them too and sketched some of them, to be printed in his "House Architecture," vol. i., pp. 342-43. The rest of the houses were commonplace, just London street Classic of the early eighteenth

OUR HOMES

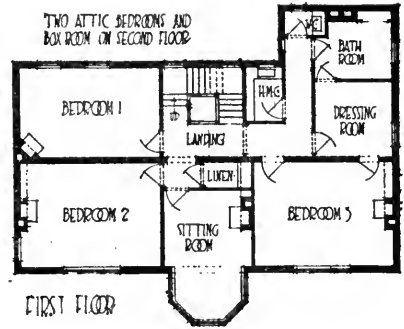
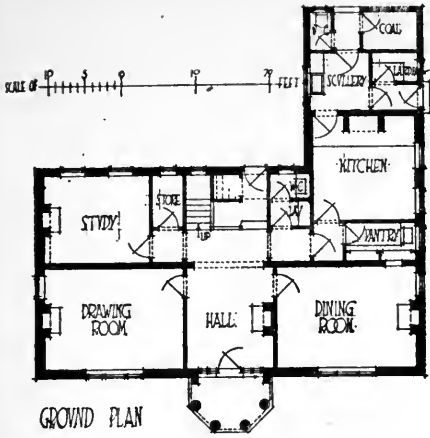
century ; it was only the entrance doors that were charmingly individual, and sometimes quite noble in design. They were often entirely of wood, with columns and entablatures, and their fanlights were filled with rich, delicate tracery, always in accord with the architecture of the doorways. This excellent work was common in many parts of London, and examples of it remain here and there ; but far too much was destroyed in sheer wanton folly. By a rule of the Portman estate, for example, before a new lease was granted by the ground landlord, a tenant was obliged to improve the property, and one means of doing this was to tear out the tracery of the fanlights above doors and to put in single sheets of plate glass. This fact is mentioned by Stevenson as " a curious instance of stupid destructiveness," but is it more curious or more stupid than our own tolerance for bad doors ? How many of us even go to the pains of buying a good door-knocker ? Would it not be easy to have one made expressly, by Mr. Alexander Fisher, or Mr. Bainbridge Reynolds, or some other master of metal work ?

The old-fashioned brass knocker was not often cleverly designed, but it looked cheery and hospitable ; its brightness was a guarantee that the doors opened into neat, friendly homes. Wrought iron, too, is attractive, having the charm of hand-labour. But what can be said in praise of our cast-iron knockers, turned out in set patterns by the thousand, except that they might be useful in a siege after all regular ammunitions for cannon had been fired away ? If ladies object to brasswork, thinking of their servants, let them choose good wrought-iron knockers, instead of ugly things stereotyped in moulds.



ROW OF FOUR COTTAGES RECENTLY BUILT AT SOUTH MYMMS, HERTFORDSHIRE. FOR V. B. TRUTTON, ESQ. THE PORCHES ARE OF RED BRICK WITH A DIAPHRAGM OF BRICK. THE DOORS ARE GREEN. THE WOODWORK IS PAINTED WHITE. THE WALLS ARE COVERED WITH LIME KOUCHCAST AND THE ROOFS WITH OLD TILES. FROM COTTAGES NOW PULLED DOWN

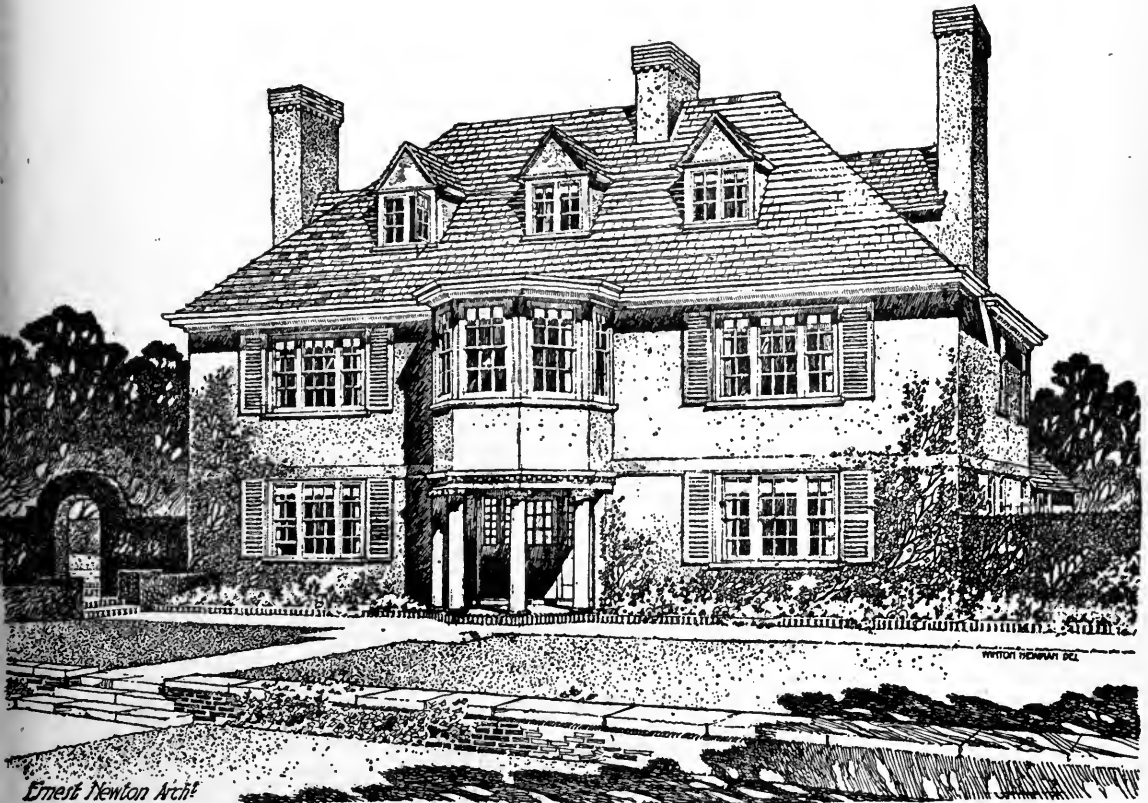
Geoffry Lucas, Architect, London



PLANS OF A HOUSE IN SURREY

SEE THE ILLUSTRATION BELOW

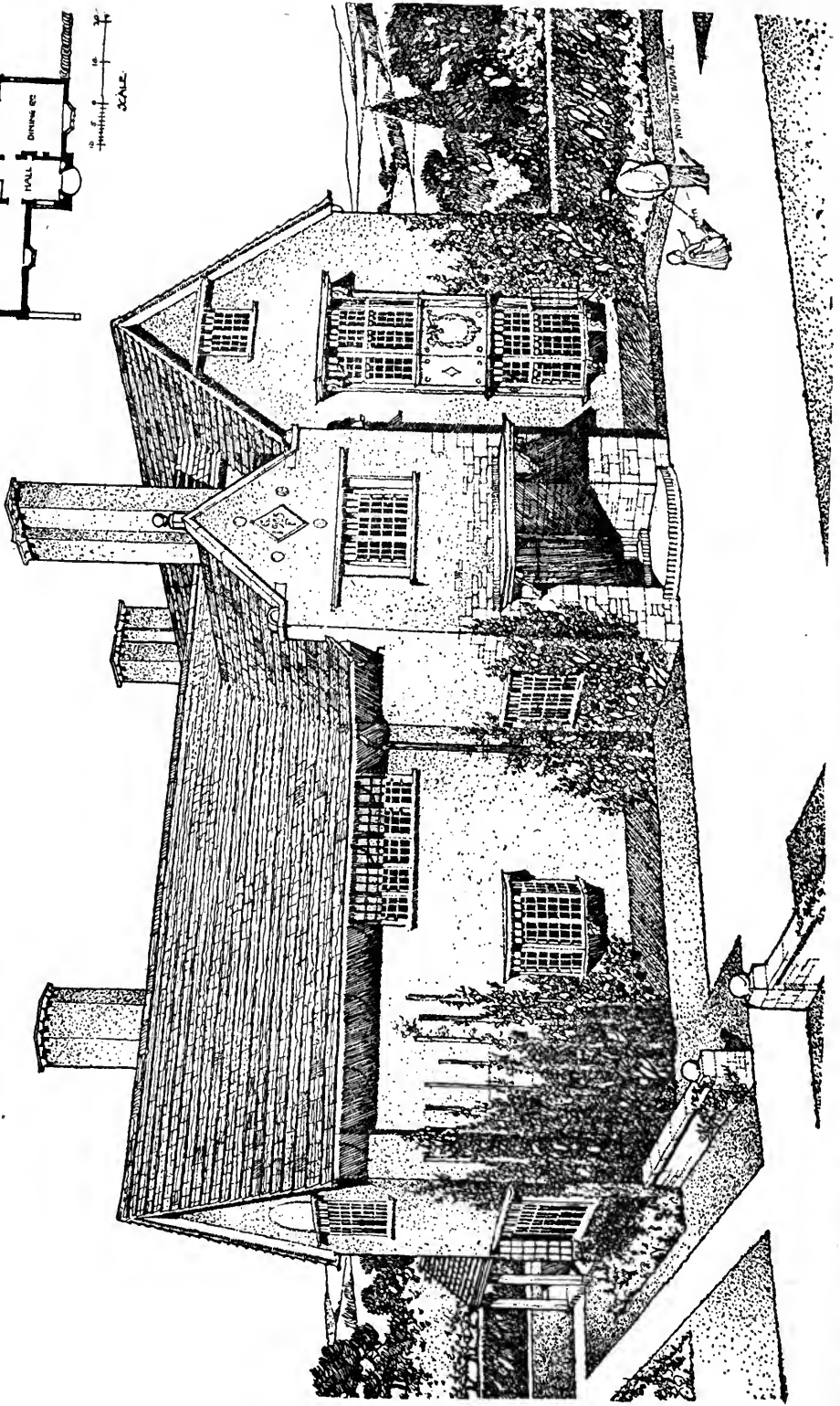
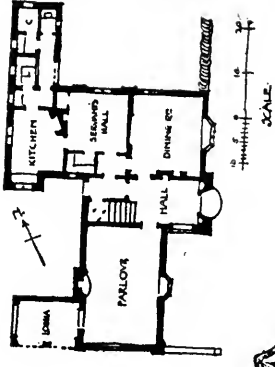
Ernest Newton, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



HOUSE IN SURREY: THE GARDEN FRONT

FROM A DRAWING BY WINTON NEWMAN

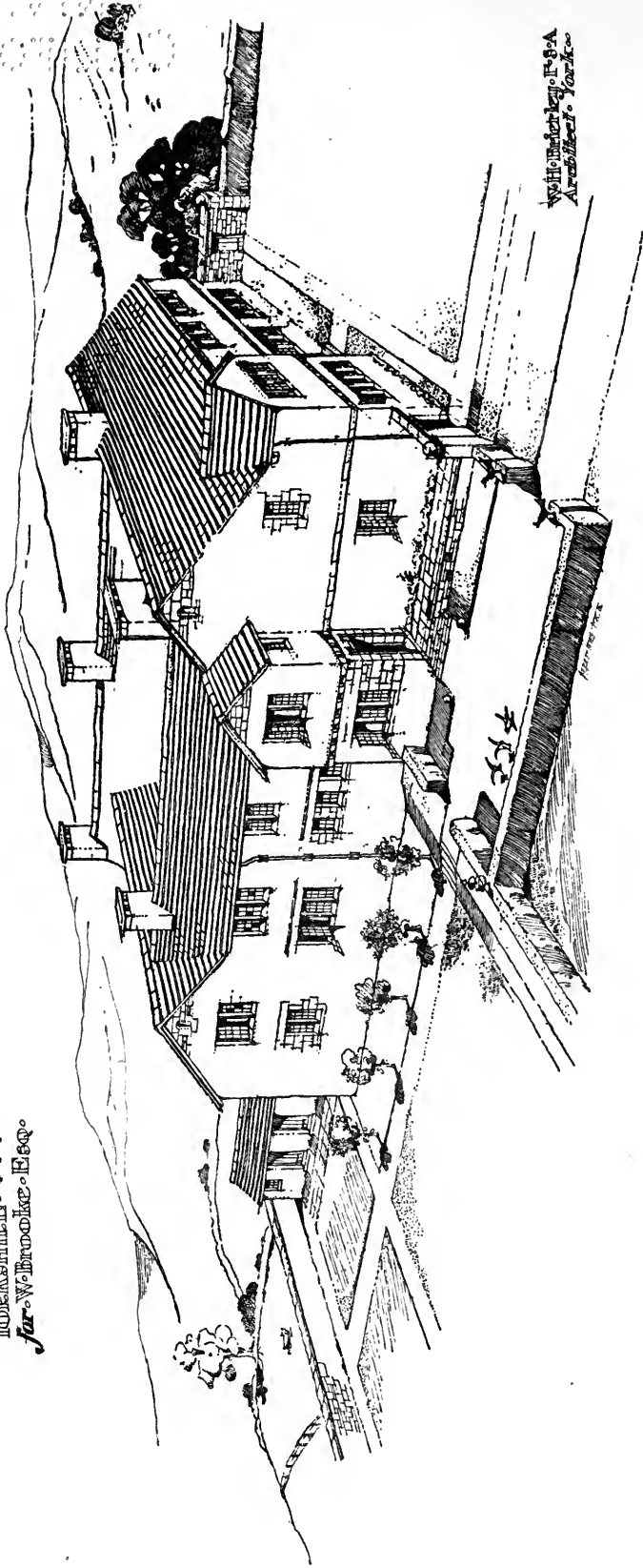
Ernest Newton, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



HOUSE AT DENBIGH, IN NORTH WALES, BUILT OF BRICK AND ROUGHCAST, WITH A BLACK TARRIED BASE, A ROOFING OF GREY-GREEN SLATES, A ROOFING OF OLD STONE, MERGING INTO THE ROUGHCAST WITHOUT ANY STRONG LINE OF DEMARCATION. THE HOUSE, STANDING IN AN OLD ORCHARD, LOOKS OUT ACROSS A VALLEY WITH MOUNTAINS ON ALL SIDES. THE INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE IS CREATURED, VERY SIMPLY, BUT VERY ORNAMENTED, BY ACRES OF BRASS AND SILVER, AND BY THE

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE

SHOOTING
LODGE • at • GOATHLAND
YORKSHIRE • ♦ ♦ ♦
Jas. W. Brodbeck • Esq.



W. H. Brierley • F.S.A.
Architect • York

SHOOTING LODGE ON THE MOOR AT GOATHLAND, YORKSHIRE. THE MATERIALS ARE LOCAL RUBBLE FOR THE WALLS AND A LOCAL GRIT STONE FOR THE DRESSINGS. THE ROOFS ARE COVERED WITH GREY STONE FLAGS. VIEW FROM THE S.W.

Walter H. Brierley, F.S.A., Architect, York



THE ENTRANCE FRONT, DAWPOOL, CHESHIRE. THE ARCHITECT IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TINY GARDEN WALL. PHOTOGRAPH BY BEDFORD LEMERE, LONDON

R. Norman Shaw, R.A., Architect, London



TWO URBAN HOUSES, 14 AND 15, GREAT COLLEGE STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON: BUILT ON THE SITE OF TWO OLD HOUSES WHICH WERE CONDEMNED. THEY ARE FACED EXTERNALLY WITH LIGHT RED DRESSINGS AND DARKER BRICKS FOR FILLING. THE ENTRANCE DOORS HAVE STONE DRESSINGS

Horace Field, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



HOMWOOD, KNEBWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE, THE SEAT OF THE DOWAGER
COUNTESS OF LYTTON. MATERIALS: TILES FOR THE ROOF AND BRICK AND
WOOD FOR THE WALLS. SOUTH-EAST SIDE

E. L. Lutyens, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

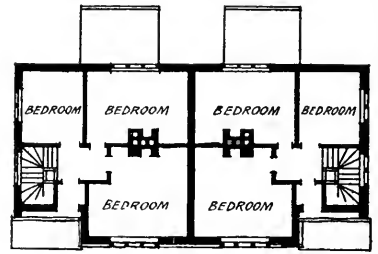
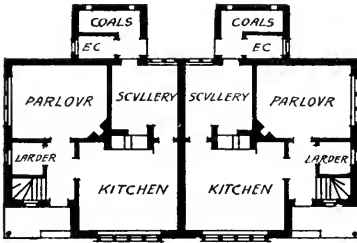


VIEW OF THE SOUTH FRONT, FULBROOK, ELSTEAD, REPRODUCED FROM A COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH BELONGING
TO "COUNTRY LIFE." FROM "THE BRITISH HOME OF TO-DAY"

E. L. Lutyens, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

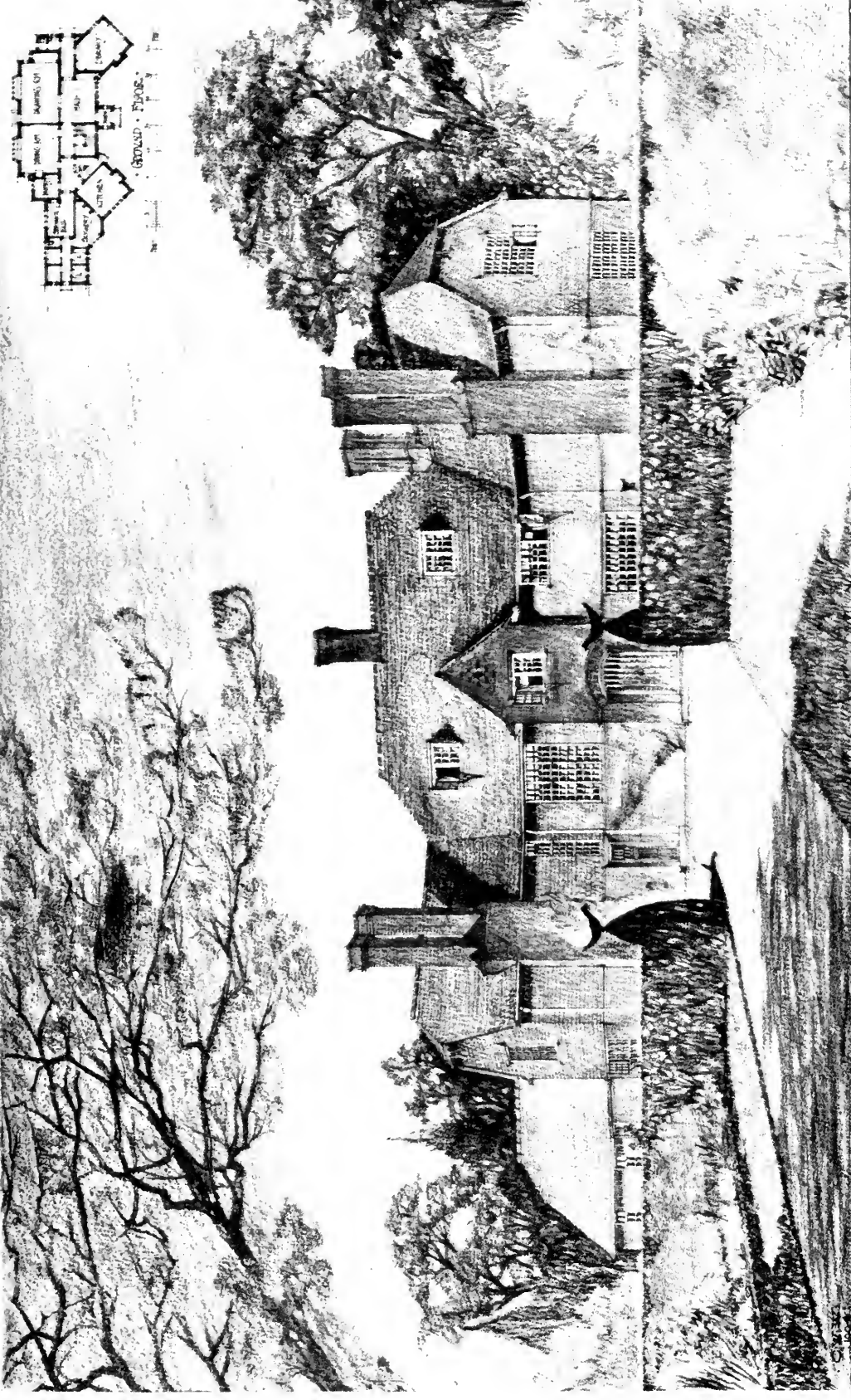
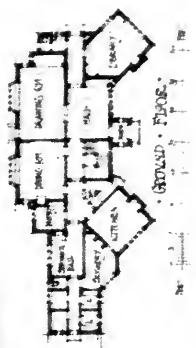
TWO COTTAGES:
AT RIPLEY IN THE
COUNTY OF SURREY:
HORACE FIELD ARCHT
1904

SCALE 0 10 20 OF FEET



TWO COTTAGES AT RIPLEY, IN SURREY, COSTING £585 THE PAIR. MATERIALS: ROUGHCAST AND LOCAL TILE

Horace Field, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



HOUSE AT EAR · EDENBRIDGE · KENT :

· ROBERT WEIR · SCHULTZ · ARCHT. ·

THE MATERIALS ARE LOCAL RED BRICKS, LOCAL RED TILES FOR THE TILE-HANGING, THE ROOFING OR GREY ASHFORD TILES, AND THE WINDOW FRAMES OF OAK.



BERRYDOWN, HAMPSHIRE. MATERIALS: BRICK AND TILE HANGING, OAK WINDOWS AND LEADED LIGHTS

Edwin L. Lutyens, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



CROFT, WINCHFIELD, HANTS. VIEW FROM THE ROSE GARDEN TOWARDS THE ENTRANCE INTO THE HOUSE

R. W. Schultz, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

THE
AMERICAN



THE HOO, WILLINGDON, SUSSEX, BELONGING TO ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN, ESQ., VIEW OF THE SOUTH ELEVATION. THE HOUSE IS ROOFED WITH RED TILES, THE WALLS ARE DINGED WITH LIME, THE THIN RED BRICKS ARE USED FOR THE CHIMNEYS AND THE DRESSINGS; THE BOARDING IN THE GABLES IS OF ELM.

Edwin L. Lutyens, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

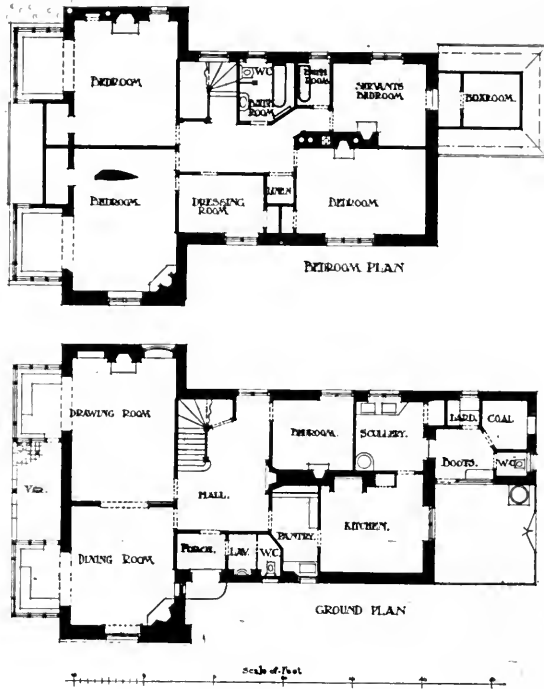




WELBURN HALL, KIRBYMOORSIDE, YORKSHIRE. A VIEW SHOWING BOTH THE OLD WING WITH THE GREAT BAY BUILT IN 1660 AND ALSO THE ADDITIONS ON BOTH SIDES OF IT ERECTED IN 1891—1896. THE MATERIALS ARE RUBBLE FOR THE WALLS AND A LOCAL GRIT STONE FOR THE DRESSINGS. THE ROOFS ARE COVERED WITH GREY STONE SLATES.

Additions by Walter H. Brierley, F.S.A., Architect, York

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE



PLANS OF A WEEK-END COTTAGE ON GULLANE LINKS, N.B.
SEE THE ILLUSTRATION GIVEN BELOW



WEEK-END COTTAGE ON GULLANE LINKS, N.B.

SEE THE PLANS ILLUSTRATED ABOVE

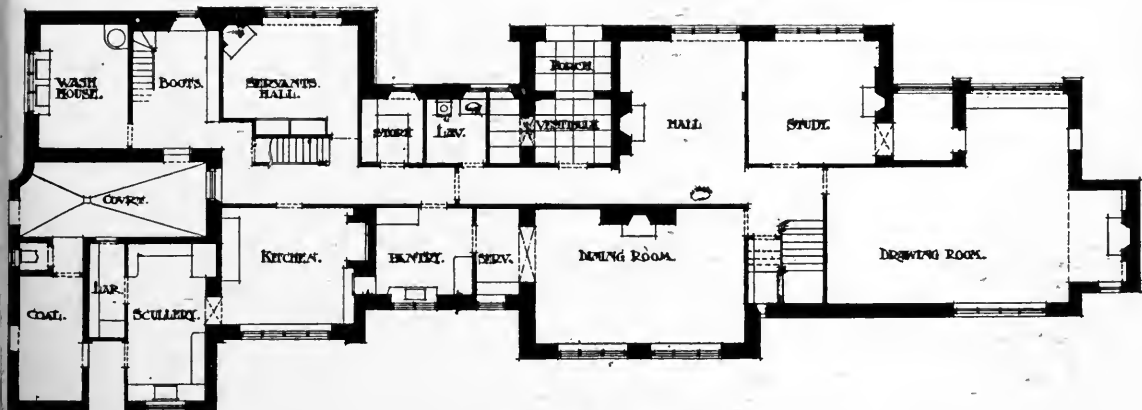
R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Architect, Edinburgh

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE

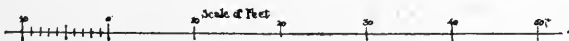


HOUSE AT NORTH BERWICK, VIEW FROM THE S.W. BUILT OF LOCAL WHINSTONE HARLED AND WHITEWASHED, WITH SLATE-HANGING AND ROOFS OF SCOTCH SLATES

R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Architect



GROUND PLAN.

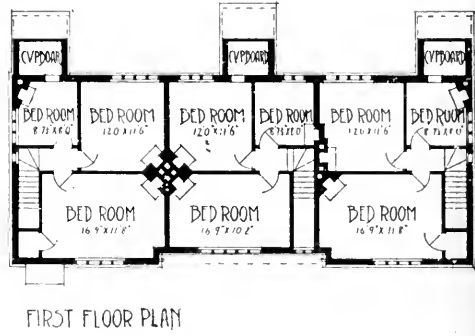
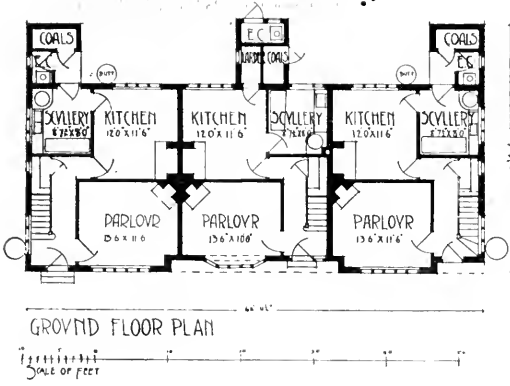


GROUND PLAN OF A HOUSE AT NORTH BERWICK

SEE THE ILLUSTRATION GIVEN ABOVE

R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Architect, Edinburgh

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE

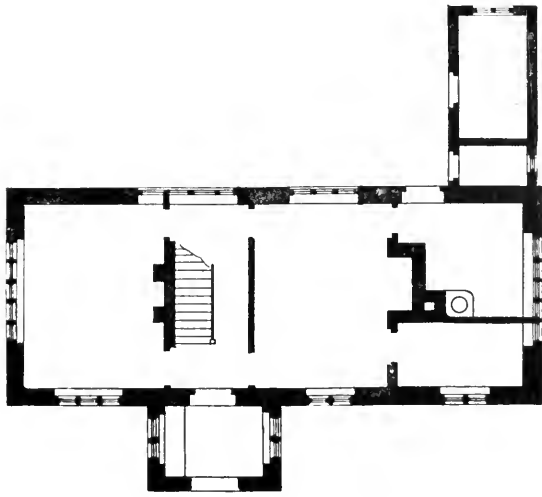


COTTAGES AT CHAPELWOOD MANOR. GROUND FLOOR PLAN AND FIRST FLOOR PLAN. SEE THE ILLUSTRATION BELOW



COTTAGES AT CHAPELWOOD MANOR. MATERIALS: RED BRICK, ODESSA OAK AND PLASTER, RED HANGING AND ROOF TILES

A. N. Prentice, Architect, London



1/8" SCALE

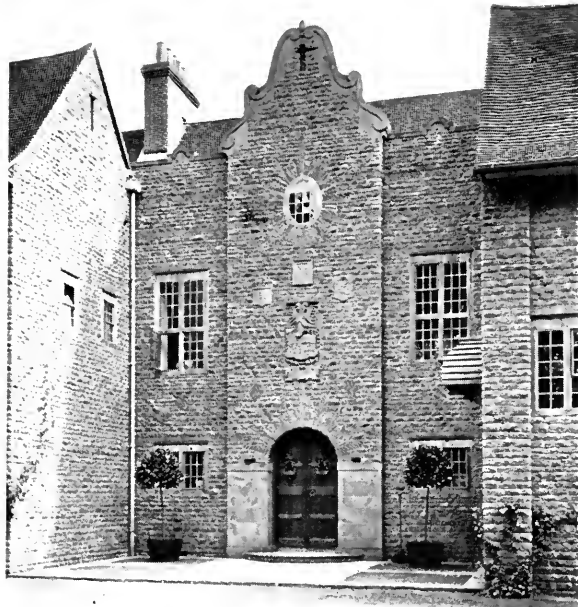
GROUND PLAN OF A COTTAGE AT APETHORPE, A PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEW OF WHICH IS GIVEN IN THE ILLUSTRATION BELOW



COTTAGE AT APETHORPE, BUILT FOR L. BRASSEY, ESQ. MATERIALS: EDITH-WESTON STONE AND COLLY-WESTON SLATES

Reginald Blomfield, A.R.A., Architect, London

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE



R. S. LORIMER, ARCHITECT

HIGH BARN, GODALMING



COTTAGE AT CHISLEHURST. THE WINDOWS AND THE EXTERNAL WOODWORK ARE OF OAK, THE WALLS ARE WHITEWASHED, THE BUILDING IS ROOFED WITH KENT TILES

E. J. May, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



LINHOLME, HOLMBURY-ST.-MARY, DORKING. ADDITIONS FOR A. P. HOSKYN, ESQ. MATERIALS: THIN RED BRICK BASE, CEMENT ROUGHCAST WHITEWASHED, OLD HAND-MADE ROOFING TILES, THE WOODWORK OF ASH

Horace Farquharson, F.R.I.B.A., and Norman Evill, Architects, London



DOVER, POLING, NEAR ARUNDEL, SUSSEX. THE LOWER PARTS OF THE WALLS ARE FACED WITH RED BRICKS OF VARIED COLOUR, WHILE THE UPPER PART IS COVERED WITH CEMENT ROUGHCAST

G. L. Sutcliffe, A.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

HOMES FROM OUTSIDE



DUTCH GARDEN, WEST HALL, BYFLEET, SURREY. DESIGNED TO OCCUPY AN IRREGULAR SITE ENCLOSED BY BUILDINGS ON TWO SIDES AND BY YEW HEDGES ON THE OTHER SIDES. THAT PORTION OF THE GARDEN OF WHICH THE SUNDIAL FORMS THE CENTRE IS AN EXACT SQUARE, AND BEYOND IT THERE ARE TWO FLIGHTS OF STEPS AND A LARGE SEMICIRCLE FROM WHICH TWO SMALLER SEMICIRCLES ARE PROJECTED.

G. L. Sutcliffe, A.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

CHAPTER SEVEN

ON FURNITURE

“It is indeed difficult at the present time to buy a piece of modern furniture with which it would be pleasant to live.”—*Charles Spooner, Architect and Craftsman.*

The hobby of collecting old furniture is very much in vogue to-day. Some newspapers laugh at it as hasty and uncritical; it is said to encourage gambling and forgery; but yet, though very often wrong and foolish, it has great interest because it arises from a wish to have things for daily use which are not merely commercial. To find necessities of that kind, uniting utility with beauty, we all glean from the past, as though guided by instinct. We mistrust the fevered seasons of our own perishable days. It is hard for anyone to believe that good common work for the home can be done in an age of topheavy advertisements—all sail and no ballast. Even the most ardent believers in modern progress get rid of their large hopes as soon as they make up their minds to furnish their homes with a charming thoroughness. Leading Americans are good examples. Though they say that the United States travel full speed ahead in an express train of progress without a third-class car in it, they are yet of opinion that they would be a long way behind the times if they bought modern furniture and pictures, neglecting the

OUR HOMES

old arts and crafts. To make money, they employ new methods ; when they spend it, they look backward ; and few of them care to admit that the past would not tyrannize over the present if beauty and thoroughness were at all common nowadays. Our forefathers never feared to show that they equalled *their* foreparents. There was no need for them to be dilettanti, for ever coquetting with old-time greatness, because they knew that their own work was a growth from that which preceded it. There are scores and scores of ancient buildings literally patched with the history of Gothic architecture ; that is to say, we see in them how bravely and well they were altered by the passing generations, and always in accordance with the existing style. A Norman church was improved first by the Early English manner, next by decorated Gothic, and then by the discipline of the Perpendicular style ; and they all united together, were quite harmonious, like four generations at a birthday festival in honour of a great grandmother.

To-day, when we study a church like that, we find in it, not hurry, nor fear, but a slow-growing self-confidence. Progress creeps ; and from Norman to Perpendicular is the inevitable result of the evolution of one style. Had there been such a reverence for the old as we feel to-day, the Norman church would have been altered in accordance with the Norman style, century after century, and genuine progress would have been delayed or crippled. Architecture in those times, happily, had a pride of craft akin to that pride of race which in the Cecil family has acted as a stimulus to original thought and talent. With us, on the other hand, the past is either neglected altogether, or else treated like the Duke of Norfolk's Holbein, as a shrine at which antiquarians and millionaires may offer bank notes, paying on behalf of a tired public stricken with unemployment and rising taxes.

Could anything be more comic ? Instead of growing from the past and doing work as good as any which has been done, we try to save ourselves by giving monstrous sums of money for "museum pieces, relics of greater epochs than our own." A single Holbein is to cost us as much as four or five painters

ON FURNITURE.

of Holbein's day earned by their life-work ; and we are to congratulate ourselves because we suffer from a connoisseurship that swells out into a dropsy of inflated prices. Yet, though we have no confidence in our own arts and crafts, there is no end to our self-assurance in matters of industrialism. You have but to open your morning's newspaper to hear the cheapjacks in their market-place, bawling self-praise, and telling you how to furnish your house splendidly for about the price of well-seasoned woods, and yet have "easy payments," and a free life insurance (the two blessings go together, somehow), and a free insurance against fire. You are not yet asked to receive furniture gratis, but trade progress flies in that direction on the copper wings of cheapness. And then, too, we have had a newspaper exhibition of Ideal Homes, which yet gave no encouragement to those artist-craftsmen who make the best furniture, but cannot afford to advertise it. Anomalies of that kind are to be found also among tradesmen. Cheapness, somehow, is at ease in the most expensive streets, where it builds palatial show-rooms ; while the few excellent cabinet-makers, true descendants of Chippendale and his contemporaries, have modest places away from the main thoroughfares, like Mr. Robert Christie.

So there ! You can take your choice. There are two classes of modern furniture ; and if you wish to be economical you will buy the good and lasting, not the bad and perishable. For ill-spent money is a double loss ; it is gone, and your furniture also will go—after causing you much discomfort. "Cheap" furniture, indeed, is not meant for our benefit at all ; it does not attempt to be a patron of craftsmanship ; its one aim is to pay dividends to limited liabilities. And so, its appeals are made to a type of person who is less modest than Bottom the Weaver, for Bottom dares to imagine the truth—that he has fair long ears. The devotee of cheapness gives himself away, but not in that frank, unconceited manner. One said to Thackeray : "I say, there's a place where cheap wine can be bought now." "Ah, indeed," replied Thackeray. "Perhaps you know where sovereigns can be got for seventeen and sixpence ?" Not a few friends of mine have bought mahogany furniture inlaid at

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the price of deal furniture, and their joy was great for a few months. Mention it to-day, and they look very ill at ease, as if they had been dropping the letter "H" in the House of Commons.

One point is more difficult than any other to understand in this national campaign of bad furniture against the good. It is this: that Trade Unions do not grasp what that campaign means to Labour. It is said that they ask and get high wages for second and third-rate men. That is true; but, on the other hand, they do not get enough for men of ability who ought to be excellent chair-makers and cabinet-makers. That is why Mr. Charles Spooner has said that the employed in the furniture trades are to a large extent underpaid and over-driven; and again, that the conditions governing their work are such as would throw a chill over the warmest ambitions. In many factories only two or three articles are made, and the craftsmanship is very much sub-divided, with the result that while many men can make a detail rapidly enough to ensure cheapness, not one can produce a finished thing. It is as if a book were composed by a factory of writers, each one having his own little job to do day after day for a lifetime: one ringing the changes on the same type of hero; another re-drawing the same kind of landscape background; a third adding sweets to the love talk, and so on. What a fine breed of authors that factory system would give us. How the poor scribblers would enjoy their drudgery, and watch with delight the gradual falling off of character in their daily thoughts and ways.

Yet that very system is applied to the making of furniture, which is just one form of authorship; and applied, too, in a way that encourages scamping. Thick polish, you know, will hide a multitude of defects; and so, invariably, trade furniture is treacled thickly with a varnish far inferior to the old naphtha and shellac, which superseded the only good polish—beeswax and turpentine with plentiful rubbing.

It is easy, then, to fake up bad wood so that it looks well in a showroom. What happens later is another affair, as buyers soon learn to their cost. And these modern methods are so preva-

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lent that the only thing one can do here is to repeat three rules :

(1) Never to buy anything which is much advertised, because advertisements not only belong to the cost of production, they cannot be afforded by honest, complete craftsmanship ;

(2) Never to buy from retailers, because retailers get a discount of at least 25 per cent. from the manufacturers, who, in order that they may be taxed to that extent without loss to themselves, whittle down the actual wearing value of their goods ; and

(3) Learn from old work what qualities ought to be current in modern furniture. For remember, slipshod trades are every whit as bad for a nation as was that debased coinage with which Henry VIII. did so much harm. You cannot separate the furnishing of homes from that quality of thoroughness which is to a nation's life and future what a concrete foundation is to a building. Home and country are one : they rise and fall together : and a visit to the British Museum will soon convince you that our own age is the least careful in its attitude to the household arts and crafts.

There are things in the British Museum so incalculably ancient that, compared with them, certain Egyptian chairs five thousand years old are quite modern—yes, and modern even in look, for they have rush seats and their joints are like those in our own chairs. For the needs that first suggested the making of useful things do not change much in essentials. Certain forms, certain shapes, are best fitted to serve those needs ; it is the constructional forms which the arts have beautified ; and in doing so, they created styles that settled into permanence. As the framework principles of handicraft and design change little, they can be compared to the human skeleton, which shows but slight variations, while styles are likened to men, women and children, because of their infinite diversity within the limits of definite types.

Observe, too, that common people do not know that the aim of the household arts is to ornament construction, not to construct ornament ; and tradesmen also, when they wish to spring a novelty on the buying public, try to give newness of principle, not newness in taste, in art. The results are often very ludicrous.

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For example, you make a clay model of a baby and put a large hole in its poor little stomach ; then your model is made into a matchbox of earthenware for nurses and mothers. Or you cover a drain-pipe with Christmas cards, set it up in your vestibule, and call it an umbrella stand. Shop windows are filled with absurdities quite as bad as those two. I treasured for a time one example in glass, a flower vase, blue-green in colour, with a crinkled brim that suggested sea foam, and a foot representing some plant which appeared to be an artichoke. Even Chippendale, though "a stickler in common sense," went popularly wrong at times, designing eagle-backed chairs, and twisting wood into ribbons tied into bows. Sheraton also at the close of his life ran wild in a zoological period, making chairs with I know not how many animals—dogs, lions, cats, camels, dromedaries, etc., and a griffin's head, the neck and wings united by a transverse tie of wood, over which a piece of timber drapery was thrown and tacked behind. Yet these senilities of taste are more unpleasant when described in words than they are when we see them, because the eye is at once fascinated by beautiful wood and exquisite technical handicraft.

Even the early Victorian furniture, heavy enough for Swift's Kingdom of Brobdingnag, that land of giants, is very well made, honest through and through ; and it shows, in a massive thoroughness without grace, the last trade efforts made in England to keep in daily use the great traditions of British cabinetmaking. Similarly, the bad in Chippendale and in Sheraton is accompanied by so much of permanent good that collectors will not let it die, but give, without flinching, huge sums of money for two or three specimens, as in the case of eagle-back chairs, for which six hundred guineas have been given for a pair. Absurd, deplorable ; but why complain ? That folly is a reaction from our own trading system, which will sell you—and sell you in two ways—a *whole suite of dining-room furniture for just a trifle more than a plain dining-table costs to be made properly.*

Well now. If a tradesman in his advertisements offered to give us a five pound note in exchange for three sovereigns, would we trust his mad philanthropy ? And don't we understand that

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all furniture represents five pound notes, and that it cannot be sold for less when it is genuine? If we do understand that, and yet waste our money on trash, what excuse can be made for *our* wild philanthropy? Why do we encourage bad trades to our own loss and harm?

The answer invariably given to that question is this: that the public of to-day is so poor, so stricken with pinched incomes, that it cannot buy good furniture. It can afford holidays, and amusements of all kinds, paying £2,000 a year to golf professionals and the like; it can enjoy the changing fashions of dress among all classes; and what households can do without four or five of those "popular" magazines, that treat the public as a brainless trifle? All these things and several others are necessary; but good furniture? No, no; the modern world is too poor for that. But the world (in its own opinion) has ever been a liver on short commons. We may be sure that our foreparents, taken *en masse*, had no more money to spend than we have, taken *en masse*. Yet they managed to buy good furniture at a price which we, with all our progressive notions, would think very high if not quite prohibitive. They knew the value of true economy: and their household things outlived them and their children and grandchildren, and are to this day good and useful. Do you want a more charitable thrift than that?

Altogether, the times we live in are not too poor for the enjoyment of honest work in furniture. The poverty is to be found within ourselves, within the national character as it is to-day. We no longer build for the future, because the rush of contemporary events, related by thousands of newspapers, makes each passing day far more important than it ought to be; and this dulls in our minds and hearts that forward-looking joy which sows that children may reap, and furnishes homes that grandchildren may have peace in them. "This will last my time, thank goodness!" How often do we hear that cry now; and the spirit of it is an outrage on the generations yet to be.

An American, after visiting South Kensington and the British Museum, said to his wife, "My dear, seems to me that these places are like religions; they show what the old dead folk did

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for their hearths, their homes, and did with so much care and love that even chairs and tables must have been like chums in their hearts." "John," replied his wife, "I guess you're hungry. Let's go to the hotel."

For women are practical as a rule; "the concrete and the individual, fleshed in action and circumstance," are what they like: the ideal is usually above their reach. It is they, far more often than men, who pick up rubbish for furniture, because it saves money for a few days or weeks. If housewives set their minds against that folly, and bought their furniture bit by bit—one thing at a time, and always simple and good—they would renew the youth of trade craftsmanship, doing with success what the revivals of handicraft have all failed to achieve, though led by such men as Pugin and Ruskin and William Morris.

The future of a race, said Napoleon, rests always with the wives and mothers; and to them we turn for all lasting improvement in the national home, its equipment and its upkeep. At present they buy too much, far too much furniture, and have a very rash liking for certain words and phrases, such as "pair," "suite," "this will fill a place," "that will match," and "Oh! we *must* have that dear pretty thing" (because some other lady, a sweet rival, has one). The money squandered on things which are not at all needful to a family would do more than cover the difference between the cost of good furniture and bad. A lady friend of mine had in a little room four beautiful dinner-chairs, two Queen Annes and two of George the First's reign; they went very well together, like all examples of bonnie useful furniture. Yet the lady was displeased. "They don't match," said she; "they are not a suite, and I hate odds and ends." Very timidly I suggested that she did not dress her walls with the same picture in a half-a-dozen replicas, so why ask for chairs which are all precisely alike? But the argument was snubbed "A suite *is* a suite, anyway," and the conversation ended. As to the four chairs, they were sold for twelve pounds, and a brand new suite of six plebeians reigned in their stead. A book ought to be written on Bad Bargains.

As a correction to the unthriftiness of cheapness, it is well



A BRONZE MIRROR WITH A METAL REFLECTOR

Alexander Fisher, Sculptor, London

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to note here the symbolism of furniture, what its use and character imply in first-rate examples. Take the Jacobean and the Charles styles. These are not for us. They belong to the life and customs of their periods ; we think of them in connection with rich laces and splendid stuffs, with dignified movements and proud gestures ; and we should leave them to be used unseen by ghosts of kings with their queens and courtiers. We should set apart for them a room with locked doors—to be visited once a week, perhaps, but never at midnight. It is a sin to put such furniture in museums, because the public hates a museum and calls it a mummy-house. What we need, indeed, is a National Palace of the English Home, each two rooms of which would represent the household life and art of a given reign, with waxwork figures to display costumes and customs. And each two rooms would have their own lecturer who would relate twice a day all that the public need know about their subject. Our museums have no patriotic method : they jumble together all the ages and sages and yet expect us to be interested.

If such a museum of the English Home were opened the symbolism of oak would be a topic in several lectures, because the national preference shown for that tough-natured wood lasted through many reigns and centuries. Before the eighteenth century, indeed, oak was used more often than any other wood, defeating its three rivals, pine, chestnut and walnut. It was in household work and in ship-building what yew soon became in the enforced national conscription of archery practice—the best timber for given purposes ; and being hard, troublesome, difficult to manage, it had a great influence on the construction and design of furniture, and also on the character of those who mastered it. You could not work in native oaks without gaining a toughened power to resist opposition. And then, of course, oak furniture has a quiet, comfortable modesty ; it never looks superfine, as rosewood and satinwood often do, nor cheap, like veneers of trade mahogany. That is why Dr. Johnson, a typical John Bull of the old type, watched with regret the disappearance of oak chairs and tables and cabinets. He hated new-fangled woods that brought into vogue daintier methods of work ; and he must have

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seen too that craft methods and materials belonged to the education of the common people. For, indeed, workshops and apprenticeships did much better for the past than free schools are doing for us to-day. And we may be sure that the grit of Englishmen was bred and born and became a racial thing during the Ages of Oak and Yew. These woods, slow of growth and long-lived, grow in many climates, but the English varieties are the hardest and most gnarled, as if Providence had made them so in anticipation of the time when their character would influence a favoured race of rulers.

Is there anything to surprise us in the fact that oak is no longer popular ? or does it accord with that change in the national temperament which responds to the recurring heats and chills of the Newspaper Press ? But if we could bring ourselves to accept oak furniture as a tonic, a friend to simple dignity and composure, we should gain much in our home life.

Mahogany also is a delightful wood, though misused to-day. Its masters are Chippendale and Sheraton, who understood all its qualities and made it into styles which belong to it and them. Though both learned much from the French, they had in their representative work a quiet distinction to which French craftsmen do not often attain ; and this quality was much encouraged by the liking they had for Cuban mahogany, a hard wood, but with a texture and colour that called for a quiet grace of line and for refinement of detail. The French, in their painted and gilded furniture, lost sight of the fact that their material was wood, so they twisted it into reversed curves of an exaggerated kind ; and this fault Chippendale copied at first, so that reversed curves form a trait by which it is easy to date his work, for they disappeared little by little as he passed from the French taste into his own province of design.

But the mahogany so familiar in Chippendale's work—beautifully veined and having a transparent rich patina often a golden brown in colour—is not the mahogany used to-day. It came from Cuba, while ours comes from Honduras, and is so inferior to it that cabinetmakers treasure even wee scraps of the Cuba variety. Large pieces are rare and very costly now.

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Two final hints on woods can never be repeated often enough. The first : Never buy furniture without a written statement concerning the wood employed, its age, and seasoning, and polishing ; for every piece of it is a servant, and invites testimonials. Its character should be verified ; guarantees on certain points should be demanded by all buyers. The seasoning of wood is particularly important, like the annealing of tableware in glass and in china. As to the second hint, here it is, as stated by Mr. Charles Spooner, a practical authority :—

“ Wood is a very troublesome material to use. Differences of temperature and climate make it swell and shrink or twist, however well it may have been seasoned, and the furniture maker has to find out how to overcome these difficulties in constructing his work. It is obviously very difficult, if not impossible, for anyone to design furniture well who has not a first-hand knowledge of this difficult and stubborn material, and such knowledge cannot be picked up outside the workshop.”

That is true, and it brings us face to face with another drawback. Setting aside a few exceptions, those who design furniture do not make it, and those who make furniture are not artists trained to use old forms in new and pleasing ways. Thus, apart from the few exceptions, craftsmen and designers are separated ; and very often they have a bitter contempt for each other. The designer has little tolerance for the uninventive labourer, while the workshop temper of mind scorns the studio drawings. Nevertheless, we owe much to the modern profession of design *minus* handicraft, though we should gain a great deal more if the two things went together in each man's work.

Furniture used to be a part of architecture, and it is so now, in the best modern examples ; for those who succeed to-day in this line of art are either architects or connoisseurs of architecture. The illustrations represent their styles. You will see that they never flirt with *l'art nouveau*, that product of second-rate minds and talents when they toil to be original, as if that very effort were not a proof that they sadly need the very thing after which they seek with conscious self-approval. Genius has ever been unconscious of its original attributes ; and that is

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why it has ever been a gleaner, a bee among human workers, gathering its own riches wherever they were to be found. Originality, we may be sure, is tradition *plus* a new time-spirit and the transforming emotions of a new artistic temperament. When this simple truth is forgotten men get into a habit of scorning tradition and of regarding originality as a thing to be talked into being. But, happily, despite the many talkers and the quaint and laboured childishness of *l'art nouveau*, many traditions have reappeared, forming a new generation of genuine artist-craftsmen, who need nothing more than that patronage which the public can well afford to give—for the sake of its household comfort.

In the illustrations you will find a diversity of aims, appealing to different tastes in architecture and decoration. But let us admire them all, even though there may not be among them more than two or three styles that would suit your home or mine. When householders do not care for a good thing, they often condemn it at once, quite forgetting that as furniture is a part of architecture it must be various, like the styles of building and the monetary conditions governing home life. Voysey furniture, for example, is for a simple life, and not for the radiant artificiality of a Court. Mr. Gimson, on the other hand, is a kind of distant courtier in the art of cabinet-making; distant, because he has a distinction urbane and sweet that never bows and smirks, after the manner of old Pergolese, whose style had a royal etiquette and a glittering daintiness, as if heavy men with gout never sat in a splendid room. It is easy to like all thorough craftsmanship; it has always a tale to tell.

Technique, too, is a pleasant study; it grows upon you day by day; and from it you soon learn that tradesmen crib good designs and then "execute them" with a vengeance, in the cheapest way possible; the result being that the inexperienced are attracted by the pleasant shapes of ill-made furniture and never go to the trouble of examining the joints, the varnish, the quality of the wood, and other details. Be your own detective, therefore. The guarding police of home life is technical knowledge: and be sure that competition will be driven into honesty if the public will but remember that the

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philanthropies of cheapness are for the benefit of those who sell.

An architect of outstanding name asks me to touch upon another point, namely, freedom from that social unrest which circulates from the House of Commons, and lowers the vitality of the arts and handicrafts. The architect in question spends £500 a year in office expenses ; during the last five years his work has fallen steadily, dropped into valley after valley of depression, till at last he has to record £45 worth of new work for the first six months of 1909. When a leader suffers to that extent from Socialistic legislation, what is the lot of the rank and file ?

However, politics in a book on art are like new wines in old bottles : and besides, there are still some technical matters to be considered. Furniture is subdivided into the following groups :

- (1) Carpenter's furniture, and
- (2) Decorated furniture.

Mr. Lethaby has given a very neat definition of carpenter's furniture—as an ideal which never looks expensively useless, because it serves everyday and commonplace needs, in a world where most men work, and exchange in some sort life for life. Trade furniture, then, appealing to the masses, should be carpenter's furniture, quite simple in its thoroughness, so that its cost of production may be concerned with essential matters having no relation to ornament. Carving and inlaying, to be of any value at all, must be good, and elaborated craftwork is costly. As a consequence, then, popular furniture sold at low prices cannot afford to be decorated, so beware of inlays and carving ! In the worst shops you will find plenty of both, while the best manufacturers have begun to make simple good things, in sympathy with the cottage furniture of bygone times. There is quite a revival of Windsor chairs and Sussex chairs, of deal tables, and Welsh dressers, and the like ; but for merit of a modern kind, I think, there is little to be compared with the Dryad Cane Furniture, an English product, and better by far than similar work coming from Madeira.

It is surprising, now that tables for books have gone out of vogue, that no tradesman has yet made an article of furniture

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in which to stow away those volumes which are too big for a bookshelf. A large number of good books fail because people say : "They're too large ; we've no place for them." Let us then revive the old-time chest, which served so many useful purposes during the Middle Ages, being often a seat, a box, a table, and a chess-board. They were beautiful to look at, and pleasant ones could be made at a moderate cost. The favourite decoration among ancient carpenters was a V-shaped patterning, a sort of butter print, cut into the wood as ingenious fillings to squares and circles.

From those chests the chest-of-drawers was evolved—and evolved very badly too. It is almost impossible to buy one that is fit for its object. The drawers are not only much too deep, but much too short ; and that is why men speak to them in naughty monosyllables. I do myself : for, you see, the drawers get filled up and the very thing I want is always at the bottom ; and how can a pair of trousers be put away at full length (to recover from bagged knees) when the longest drawers are made for riding breeches ?

Altogether, when you see a piece of furniture, criticize it keenly, remembering every detail of its use and purpose. Cradles, for instance, very often, have hoods of solid timber. Why ? The breath of sleeping children ought to rise up at once into the room, and not be hindered by a solid arch of wood. The sides, again, should be high but not solid, for perforated sides not only allow a free circulation of fresh air, they are also all that is necessary to keep a baby from falling out of the cradle.

As to decorated furniture, whether inlaid or painted, the main point to be borne in mind is this : that the applied ornament must not start out from the surface of the wood and challenge attention. On this point Mr. Stephen Webb says :

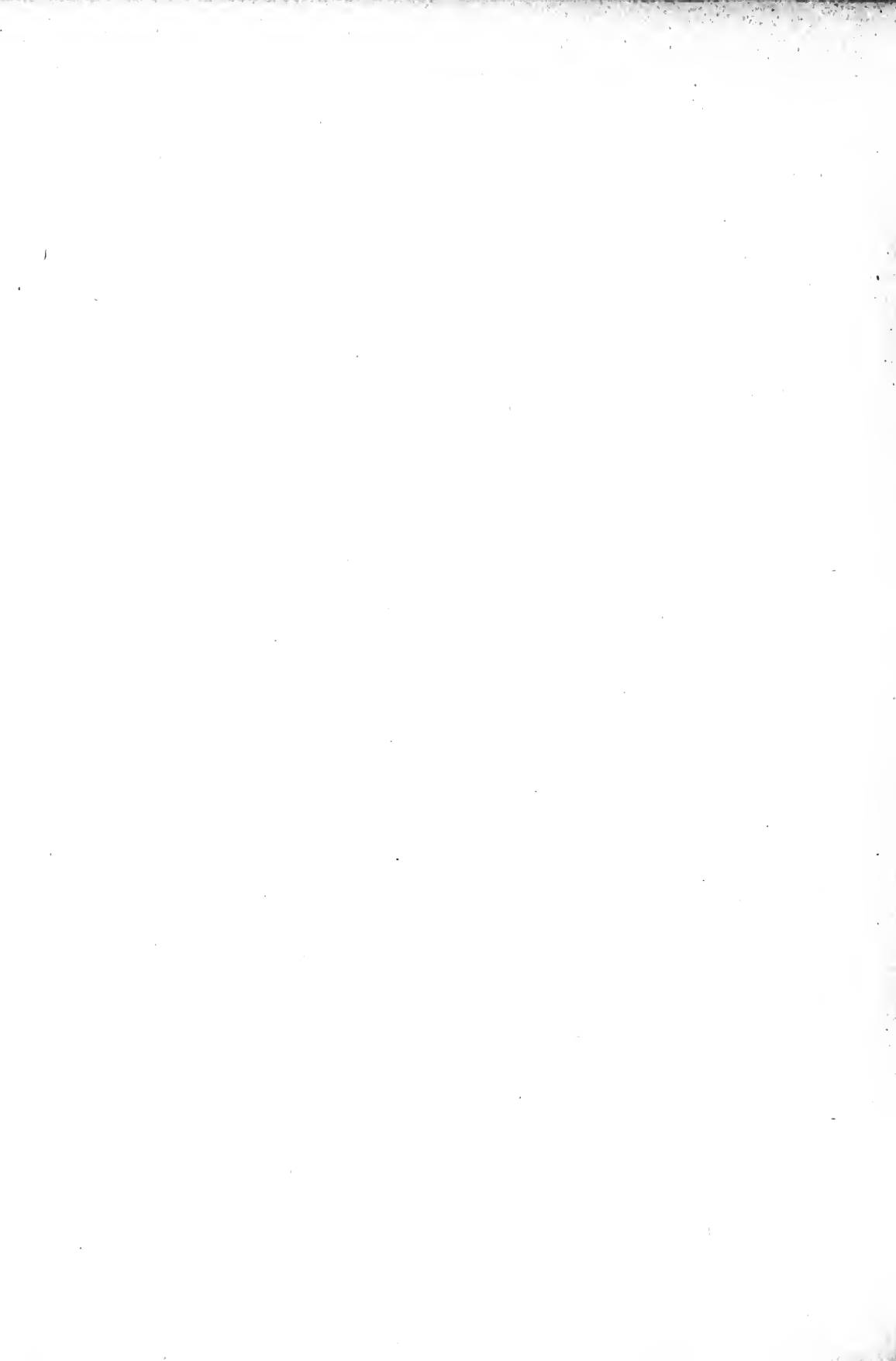
"The besetting sin of the modern designer or maker of marquetry is a tendency to 'loud' colour and violent contrasts of both colour and grain. It is common to see as many as a dozen different kinds of wood used in the decoration of a modern cabinet—some of them stained woods, and the colour of no two of them in harmony. The best work in this kind depends for

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its effect on a rich, though it may be a low tone of colour. It is seldom that more than two or three different kinds of wood are used, but each kind is so carefully selected for the purpose of the design, and is employed in so many different ways, that, while the all-important tone is kept throughout, the variety of surface is almost infinite. For this reason, though it is not necessary that the designer should actually cut the work himself, it is most essential that he should be always within call of the cutter, and should himself select every piece of wood which is introduced into the design. This kind of work is sometimes shaded with hot sand ; at other times a darker wood is introduced into the pattern for the shadows. The latter is the better way ; the former is the cheaper."

The word "shadows," as employed by Mr. Webb, denotes nothing more than a darkness that keeps on the same plane as the lighter piece of wood ; *on the same plane*, observe, for in flat ornament there should be no perspective at all ; everything should look on the same level.

One point more. Some laymen believe that veneered furniture must be bad, a mere sham. Yet an incrustation of precious woods veneered is not only an old method of wood-decoration ; it has borne very well the test of time. The veneers, laid on a roughened surface with thin glue, must be fixed by immense pressure ; then polished with great care, partly to bring out their veined colour, and partly to protect them from damp. Even in Boule decoration, invented by André Charles Boule, of Louis Fourteenth's time, the tortoise-shell inlay is a veneer held by glue ; and no furniture of a costly kind could last better.





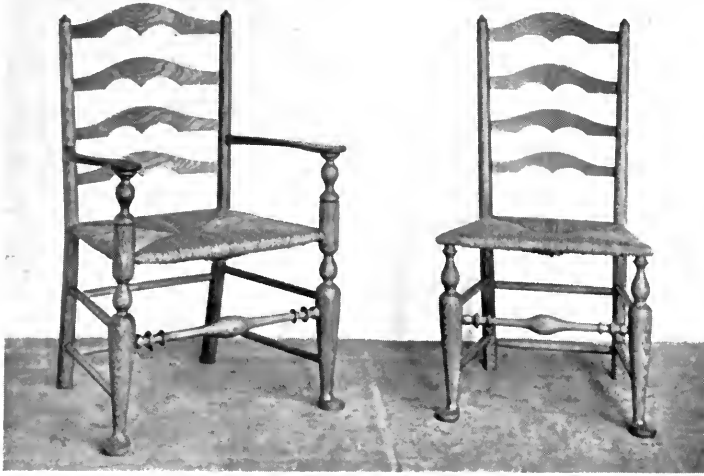
D-ENGLISH CABINET IN MAHOGANY, BY THE BROTHERS ADAM. CONTAINING RARE PIECES OF NANKIN CHINA
THE ARM-CHAIR IS REPUTED TO HAVE BEEN MADE FOR WARREN HASTINGS

Collection of James Orrock, R.I., London



ROOM IN DANEWAY HOUSE, NEAR CIRENCESTER, WITH EXAMPLES OF FURNITURE DESIGNED BY Ernest W. Gimson, Architect and Craftsman, Cirencester

FURNITURE



RUSH-SEATED CHAIRS IN OAK AND ASH, THE WOOD STAINED AND WAXED

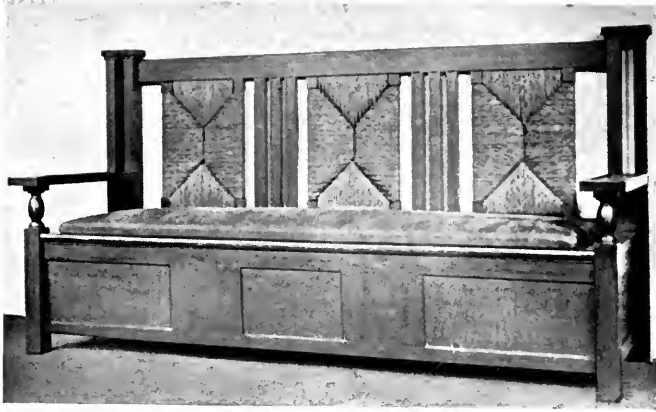
E. L. Lutyens, F.R.I.B.A., Architect



OLD-ENGLISH ARM-CHAIR (CHIPPENDALE)
QUEEN ANNE TYPE

OLD-ENGLISH ARM-CHAIR IN MAHOGANY
STYLE OF CHIPPENDALE

Collection of James Orrock, R.I., London



SEAT FOR A BILLIARD-ROOM AS CARRIED OUT BY MESSRS. THURSTON & CO.

Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A., Designer, London



OAK SETTEE

FROM A PHOTOGR.

Ernest W. Gimson, Architect and Craftsman, Cirencester



LOVE'S CORONET. A STATUETTE IN BRONZE AND OXIDIZED SILVER WITH PEARL INLAY. THE PEDESTAL IN GREEN AND BLACK MARBLE WITH WHITE METALWORK. NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF SIR ALEXANDER HENDERSON

W. Reynolds-Stephens, Sculptor, London



DINING-ROOM TABLE

IN ENGLISH OAK

Sydney Barnsley, Craftsman, Cirencester



MODERN ENGLISH DINING-TABLE OF OAK, THE LEGS DECORATED WITH CHIP CARVING ON FOUR SIDES OF THE OCTAGON. THE TOP CAN BE MOVED OFF THE WOODEN PEGS

Ernest Gimson, Architect and Craftsman, Cirencester



BOOKCASE AND LAMPSTAND

IN STRIPED ITALIAN WALNUT

R. S. Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Architect, Edinburgh



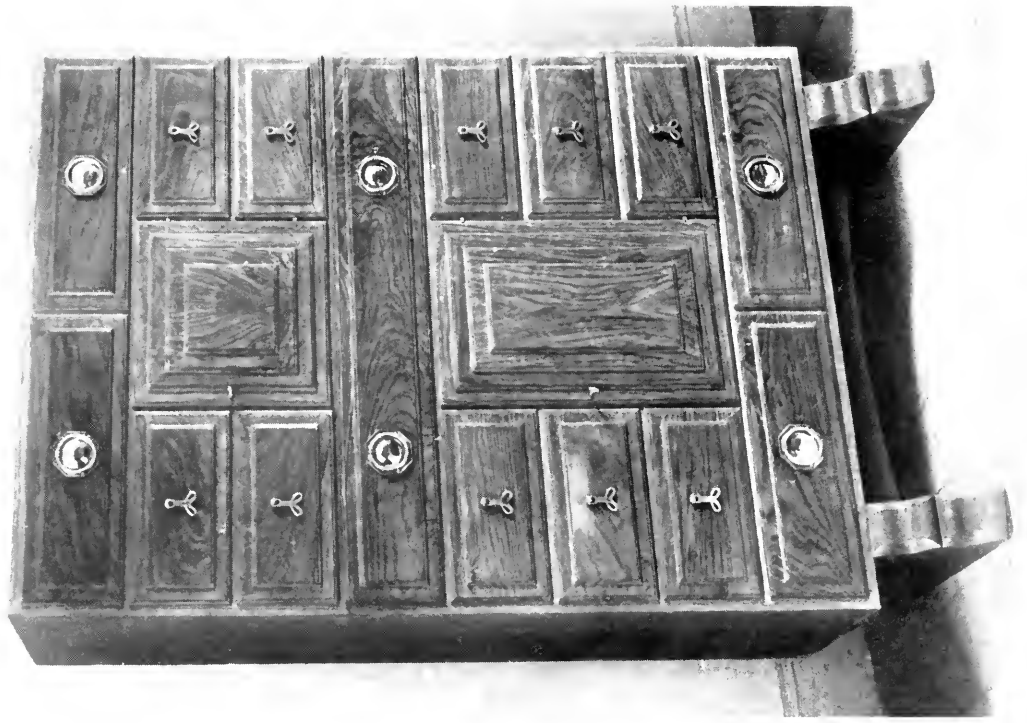
OTTAGE IN SOMERSETSHIRE

VIEW OF THE PARLOU

Charles Spooner, Architect, London



OAK CORNER CUPBOARD, 7 FT. HIGH, WITH INLAID LINES OF CHERRY



WALNUT WRITING CABINET WITH BRASS HANDLES. SIZE ABOUT 2 FT. BY 18 IN. BY 18 IN.

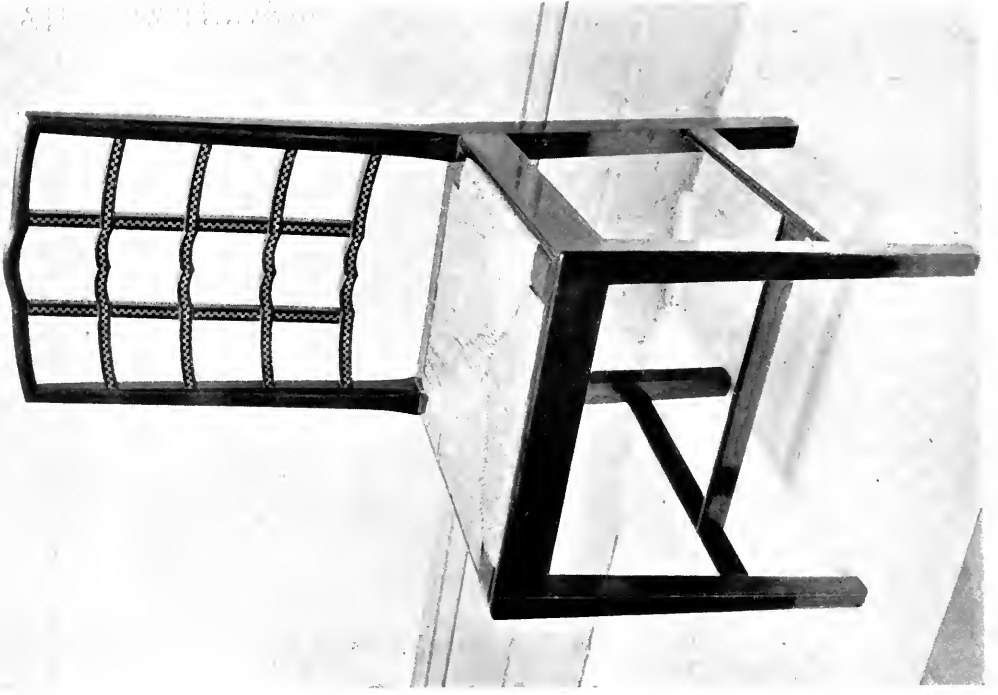


THE PARLOUR, 118, MAIDA VALE, LONDON. VIEW SHOWING THE CEILING, THE FIREPLACE, AND THE FURNITURE. THE PHOTOGRAPH BY W. E. GRAY

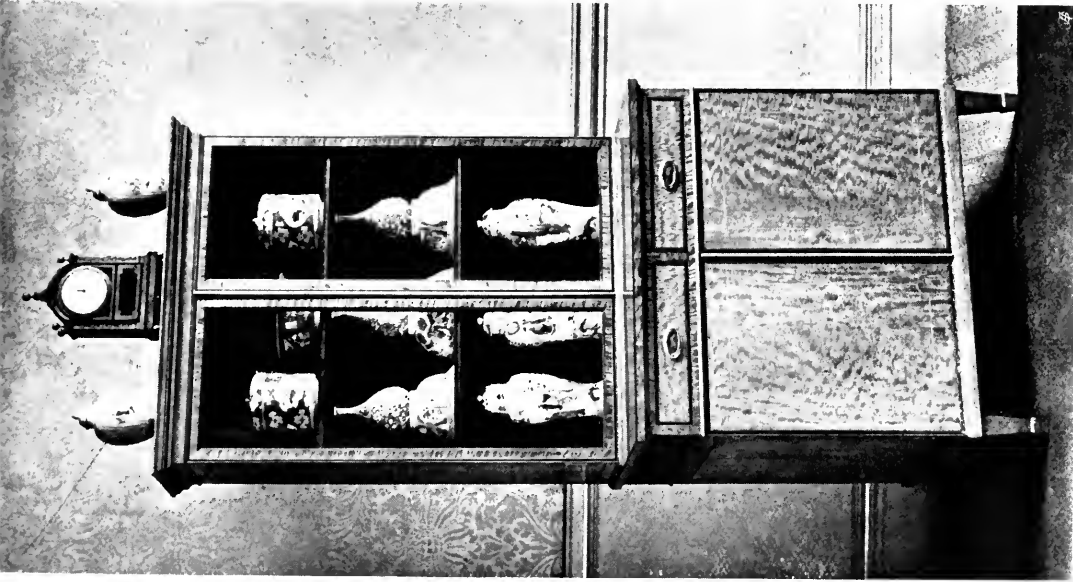
E. Guy Dawber, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



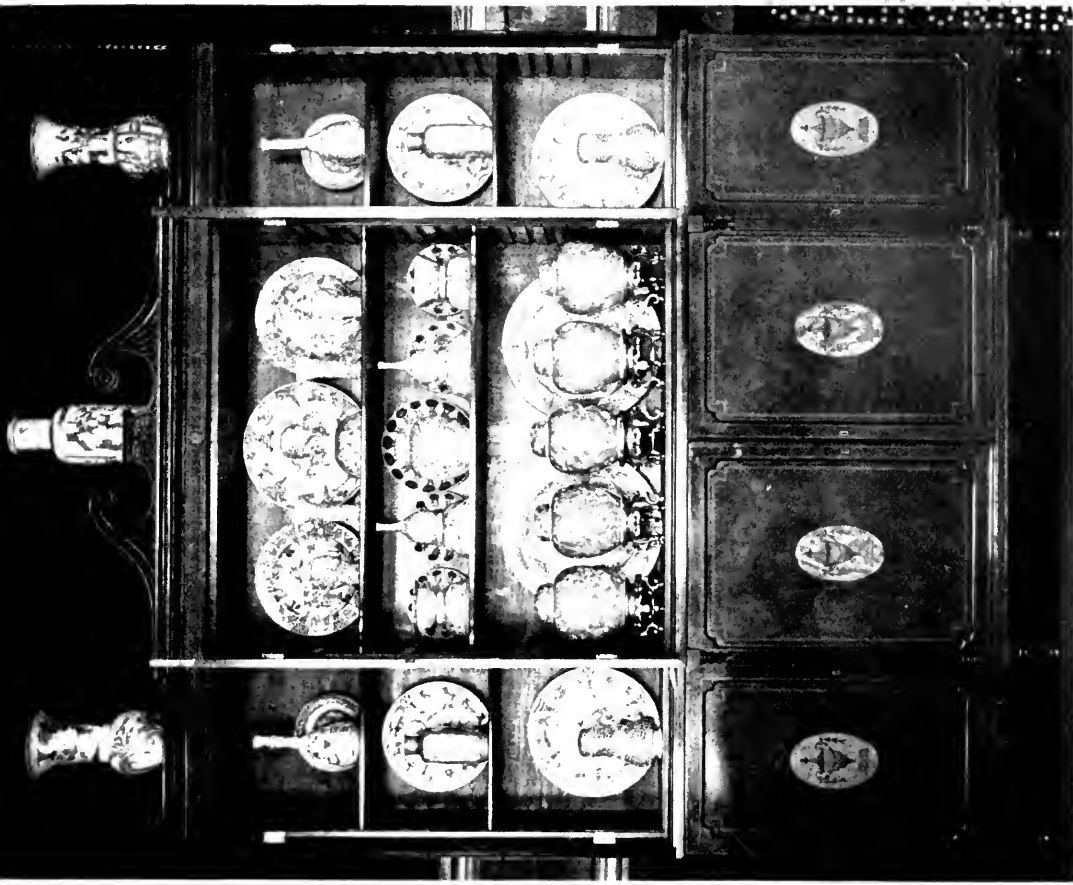
CABINET IN WALNUT AND EBONY, WIDTH 2 FT. 10 IN. HEIGHT 4 FT. 6 IN.
Ernest W. Gimson. Architect and Craftsman, Cirencester



MAHOGANY CHAIR, RICHLY INLAID WITH EBONY AND SATINWOOD



OLD-ENGLISH CABINET IN SATINWOOD, BY SHERATON. CONTAINING RARE NANKIN CHINA



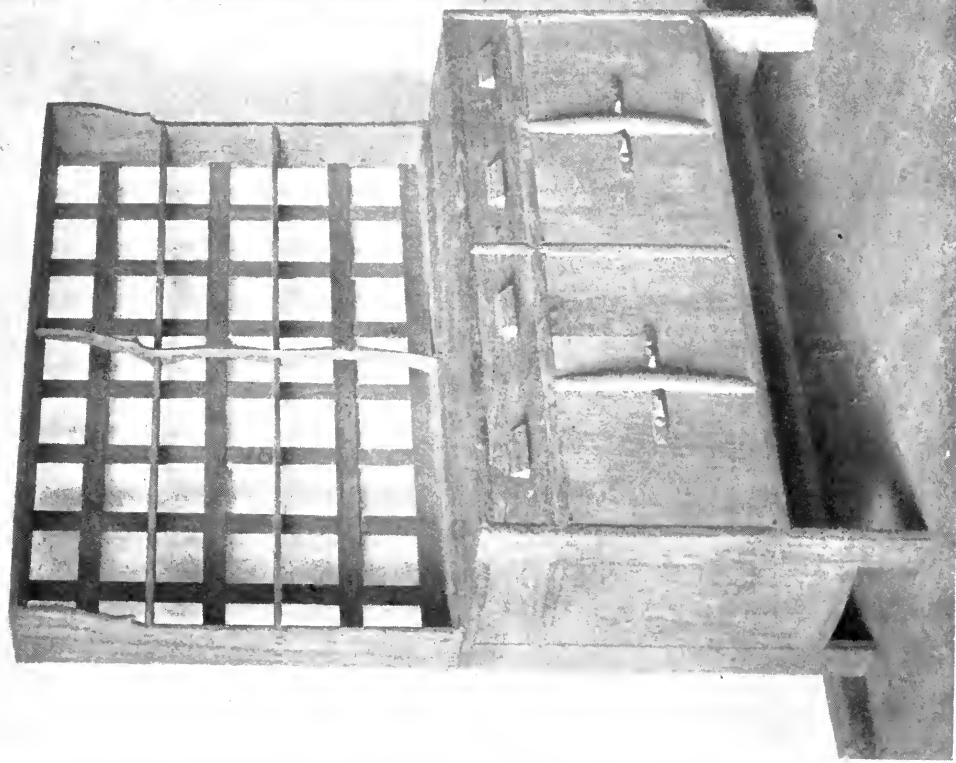
OLD ENGLISH CABINET IN MAHOGANY, BY SHERATON. CONTAINING RARE NANKIN CHINA AND OLD NANKIN GINGER JARS, HAWTHORN PATTERNS

Collection of James Orrock, R.I., London



THE LIVING-ROOM OR HALL, INNISDOON, MANSFIELD, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE THE DOOR SHOWN IN THE PHOTOGRAPH OPENS INTO A GREENHOUSE

Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin Architects



K SIDEBOARD, 7 FT. WIDE AND 7 FT. HIGH

SIDEBOARD IN ENGLISH OAK, 4 FT. 6 IN. W.

Ernest W. Gimson, Architect and Craftsman, Cirencester

FURNITURE



OLD-ENGLISH CHAIRS IN WALNUT

PERIOD OF QUEEN ANNE



OLD-ENGLISH ARM-CHAIRS

PERIODS OF CHARLES I. AND CHARLES II.

Collection of James Orrock, R.I., London

FURNITURE



CHairs IN SPANISH MAHOGANY

CHAIRS IN SPANISH MAHOGANY

Designed by
Charles Spooner, Architect, London



MODERN DINING-ROOM PANELLED WITH PLAIN OAK, UNSTAINED AND UNPOLISHED, THE FURNITURE OF C

C. F. A. Voysey, Architect and Designer, London



DAEDALUS AND ICARUS
FROM A COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH
STATUETTE IN BRONZE



LAMEIA—IN IVORY AND BRONZE, NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF WILLIAM VIVIAN, ESQ.
THE PHOTOGRAPH BY AUGUSTUS LITTON STOKES

CHAPTER EIGHT

ROOMS AND THEIR DECORATION

Householder : “ *Oh, I can't ; it's too much trouble.*”

The modern world has two hobbies more popular than any others. It likes to know a great many facts which are of no real practical use, or value ; and it loves to be ignorant of a great many commonplaces that affect life every day and all day long, forgetting that knowledge of familiar things has ever been an armour of defence in the war of wage-earning.

Long ago, this fact was the originator of trade guilds, and it elaborated systems of apprenticeship, so that lads might begin life armed with all the tested ways of work in some craft or other. Little attention as a rule was given to books—unless a child wished to enter the Church or to serve the Law. It was the national hand that was taught to read—to do with skill ; and in this matter the poor were often better educated than the rich, who kept to their outdoor sports and exercises, scorning handicrafts and tradecrafts. Nobles did not know even the composition of gunpowder, as the Duc de Nivernois said to Louis Fifteenth.

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“Is it not strange, sire? We who daily amuse ourselves with killing partridges in the Park of Versailles, and sometimes with killing men, or getting ourselves killed, on the frontiers, do not know what that same work of killing is done with.”

Madame de Pompadour was present, and answered for the King :

“Alas ! we are in the like case with all things in this world,” she said. “I know not what the rouge I put upon my cheeks is made of ; you would bring me to a nonplus, if you asked how the silk hose I wear are manufactured.”

In a world as confused as that we live to-day, using thousands of things which we don't understand, and bragging of progress whenever some new invention is added to the lengthening list of those utilities which find a home within the province of our ignorance. A telephone is not more wonderful to us than a teacup ; but we do expect it to be fit for its purpose, while the teacup usually is so ill-annealed that it is soon cracked by hot tea, whereby we lose sixpence or more.

If only we were educated ! If only we knew all those necessary things that tax our slender incomes (like bad annealing and other forms of slovenly workmanship), or that bring ugliness into our homes (like bad colour and vicious design). Many thousands in a year set up homes, and scarcely one among them has any knowledge at all of the household arts. They wish to compose, yet are ignorant of the grammar of decorative art. The men, busy with their wage earning, do not care, and the young women, harassed by their trousseau, have a vague notion that all will come right somehow, anyhow, as if a Special Providence watched over the newly-engaged and taught them the common-sense of housekeeping.

That sense matures after much precious money has been ill-spent, very often on the hire-purchase systems, which encourage a liking for “easy payments” and reconcile the mind to debt and thriftlessness. As a liberal education in thrift, there is nothing to equal the discipline of “cash down.” Running bills are a curse. You start them as you set a-rolling a stone down a hillside, and who knows what the result may be ? Easy

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payments are the sprint runners of household finance, and we lay odds upon them, often with disastrous consequences.

I would as soon recommend betting and gambling as speak in praise of any business that tempts the public to buy on a mortgage system of payment by instalments. Buy nothing more than you positively need ; let each article be the best of its kind ; and pay for it at once—and keep the receipted bill. These are the only sound principles to be given in a book ; and they should be accompanied by the famous rule with which the late William Morris continues to guide us :

Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful.

And another good rule runs thus :

There are faults in home decoration which are as bad as dropping the letter "h" in head and hand ; and every educated person should know what those faults are. Let us then consider them here, dividing them into groups.

In the first group we find the *Faults of Realism*, and these are the most difficult for lay minds to understand, because they cannot be made clear to anyone who has no real artistic perception. Moreover, writers on design and handicraft, when they appeal to the general public, make the mistake of giving the old laws without any preparatory remarks, with the result that the rules are resented as commands or dogmatisms. Not one person in a thousand welcomes the word *must* in private life ; and a settled rule of art is *must* in a quintessential form. Being this, it should not be stated until the most practical reasons of its value and authority are explained. So, in the matter now before us—*i.e.*, the degree of realism justified in design and handicraft—we cannot do better than look into the shop-windows so as to note the most prevalent and vulgar mistakes.

Here, for example, is the window of a carpet warehouse, with all the cheap popular goods thrust temptingly to the front, labelled in accordance with the trade belief that the public has "fair long ears." That carpet there is said to be "wonderful value ;" it may be bought by the acre, and it has some resemblance to a green field sprinkled with certain flowers that never

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grow outside a cultivated garden. Years ago they would have been called "chaste flowers" or "genteel posies," for they are tied by ribbons knotted into bows ; so that, if you buy the carpet, you will have the pleasure of treading on a textile fabric which tries to be three things :

(1) A field spring-green in colour ; (2) a rose garden in a field ; and (3) a bouquet tied up with ribbons.

That's a great deal for a simple carpet to do for a few shillings a square yard ; and it might do a great deal less without the smallest amount of harm to itself or to its buyers. For indeed, why should anyone wish to trample over roses and ribbons ? Why not carrots and turnips, or pumpkins and vegetable marrows ? If you want realism under your feet, why not choose some shape that has the reputation of being solid, such as H.M.S. Dreadnought or St. Paul's Cathedral ? A charge of cavalry would be more animated to walk upon than ribboned roses, would it not ?

On the other hand, if you look at any *real* carpet—a good Persian, for example—you will find an exquisite arrangement of colours in formal patterns that lie quite flat and that never try to be naturalistic. With this admonishing hint in mind, we turn now to another shop window : it is filled with old furniture newly upholstered. Admire that suite of Chippendale chairs. The seats would look well in leather, but the shopman has "arty tastes," and prefers fragments of bad tapestry. One remnant has a windmill on it ; another, a lake scene ; a third, three sheep in a landscape ; it is upon such things that we are asked to sit in peace and be reasonable householders.

And there's a little boudoir suite upholstered with hollyhocks and another with roses and cherries mixed together, as if women are so light and airy that they could take rest on any flower or fruit without crushing it. Personally, I have no wish to sit in a rose bush ; a bed of cabbages would be more comfortable because it would not set me thinking of thorns. But heavens, what shopkeeper uses common sense when he risks capital in new patterns ? He pines for novelty like *Oliver Twist* for a second helping, or like an absinthe drunkard for his *verre*.

You doubt my word ? Well then, here's yet another shop,



DESIGNS FOR STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Selwyn Image, Designer, London

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

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with plates, dishes, cups and saucers, china and crockery galore. It is quite a famous shop, yet there are few things in the window that any educated person should dare to buy. That dessert service, for example, is wonderfully painted with life-sized pears, apples, bunches of grapes, while those meat-plates are dappled with forget-me-nots and sprays of flowers. Why? Is a plate so ugly in form that it cannot afford to be quite plain? What have forget-me-nots to do with roast beef (from America) and Canterbury lamb? And cannot we eat fruit without having upon our plates a painted record of the greengrocer's stock-in-trade? What relation is there between wineglasses and maiden-hair ferns, or between rosebuds and bedroom jugs and basins? Is there, indeed, any reason why flowers and fruits and ferns, treated realistically, should be made to sprawl over our household things?

When considering these questions, have by your side a few pattern-books of wallpapers and curtain fabrics—in which, as a rule, the prevailing taste for realism in design falls as low as it can get.

Wallpapers started their career from two old customs: (a) from the formal patterns which the poor used to stencil on their whitewashed walls; and (b) from the tapestries and the stamped leather on which Kings and nobles spent huge sums of money. As to their purpose, it was to give something better to the many and something less costly to the few. That was quite a proper aim, and at first wallpapers were treated like tapestries; that is to say, they were stretched on a frame and hung up. Between them and the wall was an empty space, or rather a space filled with air, and it helped to deaden sounds. Such papers were justly named paperhangings, and no person with any taste ever tried to suspend pictures over them. They were complete decorations—of a kind.

But progress came, industrial progress, of course; it soon chivied the poor things into the wildest absurdities. Printing by hand with blocks gave place little by little to printing by machine from rollers, and as all the colours came to be put on at once only the simplest patterns had a chance of being well

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reproduced. But simple patterns were at odds with the florid ignorance of shopmen, so machine printing became as ambitious as the gaudy tastes of retail trade, to which pattern books do justice. The best papers are still prepared from blocks, one block for each tint; and each colour, printed on a length of paper twelve yards long by twenty-one inches wide, is allowed to dry before another is added. The pattern on each block is made by means of flat brass wire driven edgewise into the wood; and each tint is mixed with size and put into a well or tray. Excellent work can be done at quite a moderate cost—when the designer is a practical artist knowing the technical limits of the process and the principles of applied decoration.

When he knows those essential things and does not make foolish compromises, he respects the following old maxims as re-stated by William Morris :

(1) Never forget the material you are working with, and try always to use it for doing what it can do best. If you feel hampered by the material in which you are working, instead of being helped by it, you have so far not learned your business, any more than a would-be poet has, who complains of the hardship of writing in measure and rhyme.

(2) The special limitations of the material should be a pleasure to you, not a hindrance: and so you should make yourself acquainted with the processes of manufacture, from which alone you can learn to distinguish at a glance between genuine good work and a mere *tour de force*.

(3) It is the pleasure of knowing and liking the capabilities of a special material, and of using them for *suggesting* (not *imitating*) natural beauty and incident, that gives the *raison d'être* of decorative art.

(4) Never introduce any shading for the purpose of making an object look round; whatever shading you employ should be used for explanation only, to show what you mean by such and such a piece of drawing; *and even that you had better be sparing of*.

(5) In patterns that repeat the aim should be to combine clearness of form and firmness of structure with the mystery which comes of abundance and richness of detail: and this is

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easier of attainment in woven goods than in flat-painted decorations and paperhangings ; because in the former the stuffs usually hang in folds and the pattern is broken more or less, while in the latter it is spread out flat against the wall and is apt to look assertive.

(6) Do not introduce any lines or objects which cannot be explained by the structure of the pattern : it is just this logical sequence of form, this growth which looks as if, under the circumstances, it could not have been otherwise, which prevents the eye from wearying of the repetition of the pattern.

(7) Remember that tiny patterns which invite you to look at them close at hand are often much more assertive than large patterns.

(8) Remember, too, that no pattern to be of use to us should prevent our walls and curtains from being a quiet background.

Here, in eight simple rules, we get a good restatement of the old and unchanging principles of applied design in Decorative Art. They are all quite easy to remember. Those which householders should take to heart and act upon as a matter of course are these :

(a) That the degree of realism justified in applied design is not an imitation of nature, but just a suggestion of natural beauty and incident. Hints from nature should be gathered, then formalized into designs which a given process of manufacture can reproduce well within its own particular limitations.

(b) Hence the objects we borrow from nature—fruits, flowers, birds, leaves, and so forth—must not be shaded for the purpose of making them look round and real. If we want to see them imitated, we buy pictures by good artists. It is not the business of a carpet or a curtain or a wallpaper to vie with the art of painting. In other words, weaving and paperstaining have no right at all to compete against the entirely different processes of easel-painting.

All this, let me add, is grammar, and grammar must be put dogmatically. It allows explanation, but not contradiction ; and the useful and necessary thing here is to learn to be ashamed of doing a simple thing in a wrong way. Besides, it is so easy for

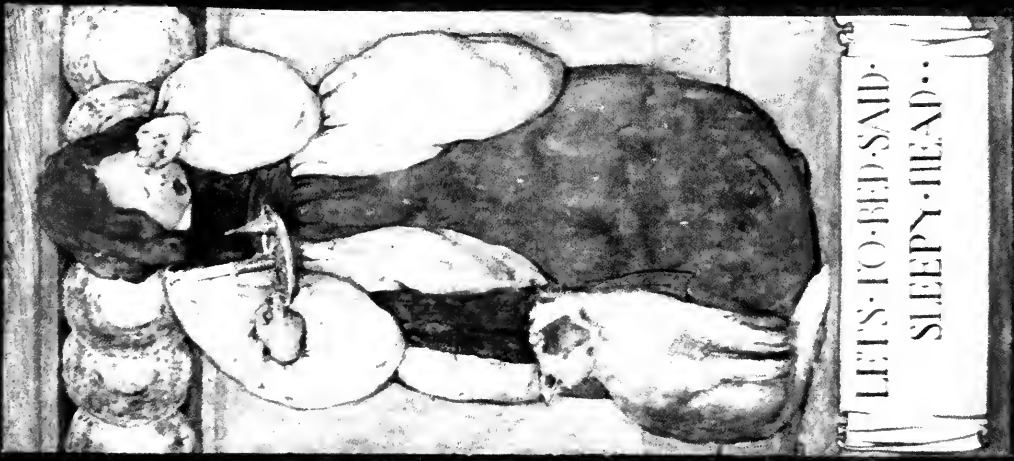
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you and others to get the best explanation of the grammar of decorative design, for you have but to visit the South Kensington Museum and note the difference between good work and bad. There is plenty of both there. In textiles, for example, compare the degraded art of the eighteenth century—and particularly of the Pompadour Era—with the glorious stuffs weaved in Syria and Sicily during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; or again, with the fine webs of Persian design, or the glowing stuffs made in Italy during the Middle Ages. In pottery, too, there is wonderful work of many varied kinds, Persian, Hispano-Moresque, Italian, Chinese, all old, and all infinitely superior to any which is made to-day. And the eye soon learns to be friendly with beautiful colour, with appropriate design: and that friendliness prevents any future liking for bad decoration.

To be brief, even one intelligent visit to South Kensington is of more use to householders than a month of fatiguing research in the best London shops. It gives the mind ideals of style; it sets up in the memory standards of quiet and reposeful beauty. One visit will lead to a second, and very soon you will understand the following general remarks:

(1) Be afraid of patterns. The percentage of the good is very low, and those which are either bad or defective make a room unquiet and ugly. Patterns, too, in these days of hurried methods *plus* aniline dyes, often fade in patches, giving a blotched, unkempt look to wallpapers and textile fabrics. Yellow dyes are rarely stable; and we should be on our guard against carmine, crimson lake, purple madder, scarlet lake, and light greens. These are all fugitive in the strong light of sunny rooms.

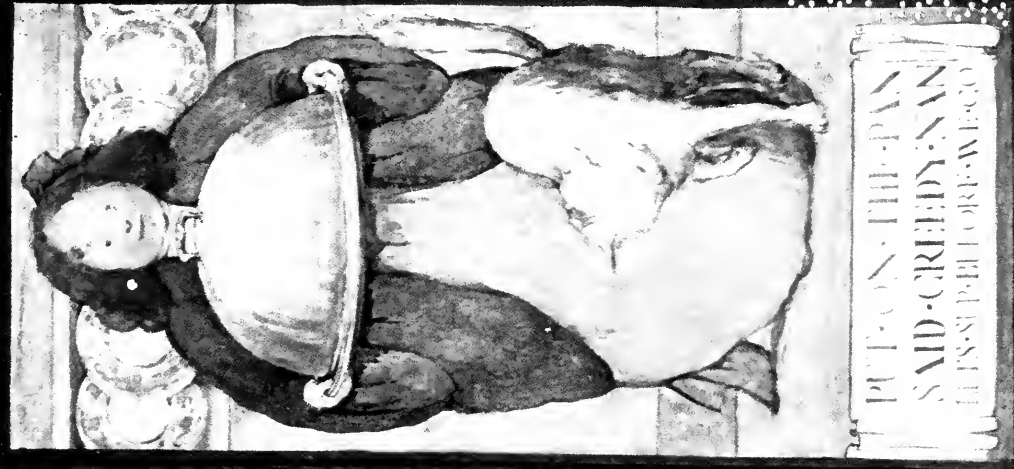
(2) Those who in their intercourse with laymen speak most favourably of patterns are men who have a trade interest in patterned goods: like designers, who cannot live by preparing simple tints for self-coloured papers and draperies, or like editors of artistic magazines, who cannot reproduce uniform tints by the inexpensive half-tone process. Designers, then, speak with enthusiasm of their craft; and their work is illustrated in many publications as if nothing else would do for our homes. Are you deceived? Perhaps five patterns in a



LET'S TO-BED SAID
SLEEPY HEAD



TARRY AWHILE
SAID SLOW



PUT ON THE PAN
SAID CREEPY NAN
HESS PER LORE WEGO

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hundred—not more than that, I feel sure—are worth the expense of printing and buying.

(3) Even William Morris, able and practical, was led into many errors by his attempt to use pattern on most household things. Some of his wallpapers are fussy and bad ; some of his draperies would dart out from their place in any room and harm a good scheme of decoration. You can say with truth of William Morris what Mr. Birrell has said of Leslie Stephen : that “ every now and again he goes hopelessly wrong, amazingly wrong. This is most endearing.” For one cannot like a master and teacher that never dares trip into a fall. Only—and here we meet with the drawback—the reputation of Morris has carried his failures into many homes, and no reputation can bear that trial without injury. There are those who say, indeed : “ It is a question perhaps whether the firmer parts of Morris’s work will hang together and be coherent after the removal of the rubbish.” That’s too harsh, but Morris invited it by his too ardent delight in pattern, pattern everywhere, with little rest for jaded eyes.

(4) When a great master of design goes wrong, we may be sure that layfolk should keep very careful watch over the same passion which caused him to blunder. That is why I have asked you to be afraid of patterns and to have faith in simple good tints of attractive colour.

Before we pass away from this important question of applied design, let me give a striking example of mistaken realism. A man of science had a talk with a professional wood-carver. He began : “ I’ve something to show you that seems to me quite good in an exceptional way of skill and taste. It is a big piece of carving by my daughter, the result of a year’s work. It is a veritable picture in oak, showing full-sized many kinds of fruits, apples, pears, peaches, bunches of grapes, melons, as well as two jays, hungry fellows, standing with outspread wings and ruffled feathers as if about to fight for the first share of a ripe meal. Quite wonderful, my good friend. Life-like. Accurate observations in every detail. You’ll feel tempted to take up the peaches and eat them. I do.”

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“Not much flavour in oak,” the wood-carver answered, with mild irony.

“Oak indeed! You’ll forget the oak, the peaches and things are so real,” said the delighted father.

“I understand,” returned the craftsman. “In oak, of course, it is easy and reasonable to give the coloured plumage of a jay, the delicious bloom on grapes, the velvety soft texture of peaches, and the fleshy modelling of pears and apples. These characteristics with rich subtle colours are just the very things which wood can represent with all the varied truth of a William Hunt or a John David de Heem.”

The scientist turned very red. Sarcasm was not the flavouring he relished in talk.

“You mean,” said he, “that my daughter has wasted her time and that I’m ignorant of a special subject?”

“Oh, as to that,” said the craftsman, “we can find nicer words for truth. If I were to talk to you about your own study, paleontology, you would snub me, and I should deserve to be snubbed, but craftsmen get so much advice from the inexpert that they are perplexed when anyone pays attention to their gathered experience. I do not then ask you to value my word more than your daughter’s work.”

“But my trade is to learn, to get at the truth,” the scientist answered. “Work is right or wrong in principle, in aim and intention; and I believed that the aim of all art was to come as near as possible to the truth of things seen in nature.”

The craftsman nodded. “I know,” said he. “Most persons think that. Yet if truth to nature were the most important quality of art, the reflection in a mirror would be more artistic than any painting done from nature.”

“Good,” said the scientist. “That argument is fair. And as I like lessons in things near to me, perhaps you’ll go on? Eh? For example, how are the arts divided? Can you split them into classes and give to each class certain definite principles to guide the unwary?”

“Well,” said the craftsman, “art’s a hard nut to crack. It deals in subtleness of form, of colour, of composition, things

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for which there are no words in any language, and which depend for their appreciation on emotions as wordless as are those with which music gives you a complete, satisfying pleasure."

"Yet music has grammar, has counterpart and harmony," answered the scientist. "Have the other arts no such defined, teachable, backbone supports?"

"No doubt," said the craftsman. "If you like, I can put a crutch under each of your arms, but I can't teach you to walk erect in any province of art known to me. You're aware, I suppose, that the arts may be put into three divisions: the worded, literature and poetry; the soundful, music in all its branches; and the silent, handicraft and design, including all forms of painting, sculpture, architecture, and things in which utility and beauty should be united. It is within this last division or class that your daughter's work has a place."

"It's a vast division," said the scientist; "like a great continent with many nations and peoples. Can't you map it out for me a little? Eh? What?"

The craftsman smiled. "Here's enthusiasm," said he. "Let me look out, or I shall lose myself. To be hunted by questions from a man of science—that's an adventure to make my flesh creep. Heavens above, where am I to begin? I don't know; but I'm on safe ground when I say that this particular division of art has two provinces, one decorative, the other realistic; and this means—well, shall I give you an example?"

"If it explains, yes; if it will twist me about in a labyrinth, no, for I don't like to get dizzy."

"It explains right enough," returned the craftsman. "The art of painting is sometimes decorative, sometimes realistic. When it is decorative its aim is to beautify a flat surface without destroying that quality of flatness, as in a wall. Consider the purpose of a wall. It divides an architect's plan into rooms, and it should give us warmth and freedom from noise; so it must *look* solid and secure; and convenience tells us that it should be upright and flat. Well now. If you wish to beautify this wall by painting on it, you must remember that its flatness, uprightness, and look of solidity are things to be kept and used

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by your art. You do not wish to peer *through* your wall at a distant scene. Your perspective then must be conventionalized ; its object here is just to indicate or suggest distances, vaguely, lightly, as good sculptors do in a frieze of figures, where every detail seems at pretty much the same distance from the spectator's eye. In decoration, that is to say, the parts of a design are all approximately *on the same plane* ; while in realistic art we expect and admire pictorial perspective ; plane after plane recedes from us into a distance that seems very far away. Here a flat surface is made to look like many surfaces with infinite space in them ; and this magic of effect is just the very one that we do *not* need, that we should refuse to tolerate, in wall-paintings, in tapestries, and in other decorations for solid flat walls.

The scientist thought for a moment. " I begin to understand," said he, " but one fact upsets me. It is this : that all artists hang up their realistic pictures on walls, so why not paint them direct on the surface of the walls ? "

" I have no excuse to make for a wrong custom or practice," said the craftsman. " In old days when painting was a part of architecture, recesses were built for pictures, so that they might hang *within* walls and look like integral portions of a building. But this was troublesome and expensive in private houses, so a compromise was hit upon : pictures were well framed and hung up, and the frames separated them from the solid flat wall behind. By rights, all framed paintings should hang within recesses and be flush with the wall surface ; but this we shall never get, for it means a complete revolution in house architecture. The only thing we can do is to mark in a distinct manner the compromise we make, partly by a strong contrast between the frame and its background of wall, and partly by not hiding the means by which the pictures are hung up. You will note, for example, that artists like black frames and that they show the wire or the chains from which their pictures hang. This isolates the realism of painting from the conventionalism of architecture. To use a French expression, *a picture rightly hung up does not make a hole in the wall.*"

" I can go on now," said the scientist. " I begin to see that

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under certain conditions the real or natural is wrong in art. But I wish to get nearer to wood-carving. What's the next step ? ”

“ Tools and materials come next,” said the craftsman. “ You know, of course, that all tools and all materials have special uses and special limitations ? ”

“ Special limitations,” repeated the scientist. “ What may that mean ? ”

“ That there's a stopping point in their utility. Some things, some effects, they are fitted for, while for others they are not ; and so the aim of all technical education is to find out what each material with its tools can do in the way of art without overstraining its capabilities. You would laugh if I asked you to give me on a trumpet the notes of a violin. Yet you admired your daughter's wood-carving because it tried to do in oak what only a painter here and there can achieve with colours and brushes. Believe me, all the *tours de force* in the world cannot get from any material and its tools—from any handicraft—anything more than sound tried methods will extract from it. And that is why an expert's opinion ought to win some attention even from those who do not know.”

The scientist took the sarcasm with approval. “ It seems to me,” he said, “ that you hit Grinling Gibbons as well as myself. Gibbons did his very best to be realistic in wood. But he was wrong and you are right. This I see clearly now. It's plainly absurd to give us fruit and flowers in wood—mere skill of hand with none of the finer qualities of flowers and fruits. I shall now be able to look at design from a practical point of view. When I see a wall-paper representing a tree with parrots in the branches, I shall ask myself whether that is a kind of background to be repeated all over our walls ; and I'll accept no pattern of any kind until I feel sure that it is used rightly for a given purpose and in a given material. If cast iron tries to look like wrought iron, I'll cry out ; and if bedroom ware is covered with tulips, roses, and other flowers, I'll know that the manufacturer treats me as a fool. Decorative design is the art of common sense, it seems to me.”

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“Right you are,” the craftsman asserted. “But when will the public think as you do now? At present it knows nothing about the household arts and crafts, and is tricked by every little absurdity of trade and advertisement. That ignorance, too, is a cumulative income tax of shillings in the pound.”

The man of science flushed. “Upon my word,” said he, “I paid a large sum last week for a silver dessert service, and was attracted by the fact that the knife-blades were elaborately engraved with sprays of ferns. Think of that. Ferns on silver fruit knives! And last week I thought that waste of skilled labour quite reasonable and beautiful! What a privilege to be the blind slave of a silly tradesman! And how cheering it is to know that newspapers exist because they advertise the self-praise of competing speculators, who invite the public to pay all their expenses and give them handsome profits. The unhappy public! A gambler mainly in trash, for ever buying without knowing the difference between craft and craftiness. Does it matter?”

“Not in the long run,” answered his friend. “Deceptions teach, for they are found out; and already a good many manufacturers do not brag because they do well what all should be ashamed to do in a scamped fashion. The public little by little will learn to command with judgment; then tradesmen will obey with skill and taste. I don’t fear advertisements now, because they have been turned by prodigal use into outworn jokes, which only fatuous persons heed. Very shortly, in a new generation, spoken criticisms of good workmanship, passing from household to household, will be the valued advertisements; then newspapers and magazines will have to raise their sale prices or disappear. It’s just a matter of education. The untrained now pay many huge bills for the advertising of jerry-made things; train that public, and the money hitherto spent on advertising will be put into workmanship, where it ought to be.”

Let us hope so. Anyhow, one thing is beyond doubt: that craftsmen hit a good many nails on the head. But others remain to be hit, and among them are some varied questions concerning

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DECORATIVE COLOUR.

Colour, you will understand, is very different from colours. Colours are pigments such as are bought in tubes and in cakes, while colour is a perfect harmony produced by a fortunate combination of several or of many. Colour, in even its simplest effect, is never pure pigment. Its white is not cold, but warm like the tint of cream or iridescent like the inner part of a sea-shell. Its reds and blues are not known by the names of paints ; each is a composed tint, a thing created by a fine sense of colour, as rhymes and cadences in poetry are created by a nicely balanced feeling for the music of words. And this gives you one guiding principle :

Having learnt by heart the pigments sold in shops, decline to accept them pure in anything pretending to be a work of harmonious decoration.

Further, some colours very tempting to the inexpert are very dangerous even in the hands of experienced decorators. These I wish to underline. Terra cotta is one of the very worst, because it deadens a scheme of colour : it upsets harmony like a discord. Vermilion and Emerald Green are very nearly as bad ; they should be used very sparingly and never without expert advice.

George Morland said that every picture needed a good touch of brilliant red, but when he employed vermilion he seldom (if ever) forgot to glaze it with a ruby tint, so as to put tone into its heavily assertive brilliance. You may, in fact, accept it as a rule in room decoration, that reds should have very little intercourse with vermilion and a great deal with ruby hues. As a guide in this matter, study the works of the most famous painters, and above all those of the great colourists, like Titian and Rubens. And in looking at a picture fix your attention on the principal group ; note the plots of colour, and see how they are foiled here and repeated there by their surroundings. Hold up your handkerchief near the most brilliant white, so as to get the tone of the artistic greyed white which the painter chose for his effect. Notice, too, with care and interest, how one tint is modified by being put in juxtaposition with another.

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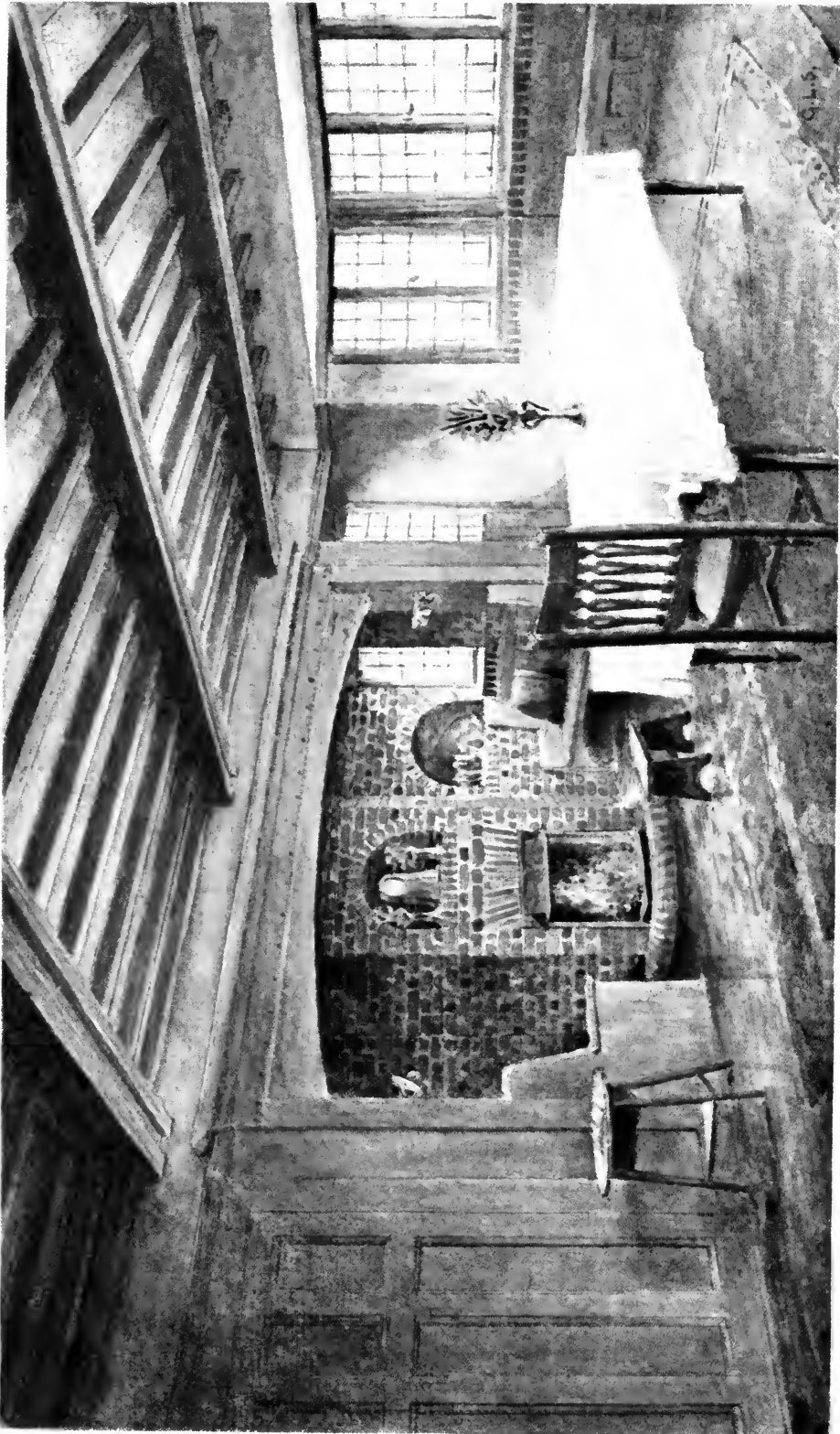
Any person with intelligence—if he or she will but take the necessary pains—can learn many household lessons from famous pictures in the National Gallery : lessons in harmony of colour—the most essential of all things in the decorations of rooms.

One lesson—and it is not by any means the least important—is to be afraid of green, Nature's favourite colour in wet England. But Nature's brilliance has a number infinite of fleeting greys and changing shadows, while we in our rooms have to use in our textile fabrics such greens as can be got by the dual process of dyeing first with indigo and then with some good yellow, like weld ; and as the yellow dye stuffs are none of them permanent, we cannot tell what the greens may be like after a few months in a sunny room. How foolish then are we if we attempt with our imperfect greens to vie with the beauty of English landscapes in their Maytime verdure !

Yet there are decorators who tempt us to that rash venture. For greens are so refreshing to English eyes that we lose count of their dangers in art—dangers admitted by all landscape painters. I have experimented with them myself, but failed utterly. And I have on my table a piece of green drapery designed by a man who has given his whole life to decoration and whose eye for colour is as a rule excellent, yet his adventure in greens would set your teeth on edge, I hope and believe. What then are the rules or maxims to be kept in mind when shopmen parade their verdant carpets, curtains, and wall-papers. There are two :

(1) Dark peacock greens are useful for felt carpets under rugs, for window curtains, and for table covers, particularly in the case of polished dining-tables, which, when left uncovered reflect so much light from windows that they break up the colour-harmony of a whole room, shimmering as do pools of water in a landscape.

(2) Pale greens should be used sparingly and with the greatest tact ; their tints should not be vivid but tempered and grey. When vivid hues are chosen the materials should be of a lustrous kind, like silks, which take reflected lights, and these vary the brightness of the green. Further, do not forget that British



LIVING-ROOM IN A COTTAGE

FROM A SKETCH IN WATER-COLOUR

G. L. Sutcliffe, Architect, London

ROOMS AND THEIR DECORATION

home life is very much dependent on artificial light, so that tinted fabrics and papers should be tested not by daylight only, but by gas or electric light. Greens and yellows are affected so much by luminants that those which are pleasing by artificial light are often crude by day.

From these warnings we turn to an expedient in the choice of colours for a room. I need but remind you of the trying, wearying difficulties—the strips of patterns in huge books, the dismantled room with all the furniture in the middle swaddled in dingy grey clothes, and the walls either stripped of their old papers or else covered with them, so that the eye is influenced by their faded tints. How in such circumstances to make a right selection is a task very hard to carry through with even partial success. But you will gain confidence if you remember, first that your furniture gives you a dominating note of colour, and next that a table, however small, is a good flat background for testing patterns. Let the table be of the same wood as the furniture of each room; upon it put patterns of textile fabrics and of wall-papers; note how it accords with each pattern, and then choose those patterns which harmonise charmingly with the wood. This done, get full lengths of the chosen materials and test them *in situ*, that is to say, you pin up a length of paper, put the table near it, show your carpet in its relation to the table and to the wall, and bring your curtain fabric into the scheme. Then standing at the other end of your room, you look at the general effect through a hole made by arching your hands; for by this means you hide from sight the rest of the room and fix your whole attention on the arranged patterns.

There is one point, though, to be borne very carefully in mind, and it is a point forgotten by the great majority of householders: namely, *that carpets and walls should oppose each other, should make contrastive harmonies, and not have tints of the same colour*. It is better that the carpet should be in warm tints as in Persian fabrics, and that the walls should be cool but not cold. Cream white, for example, is excellent for walls as in the panelled rooms by Mr. Walter Cave; and that white may be got in papers and in various kinds of inexpensive colour washes.

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Why should white be mentioned first of all as a background ? The reason is practical : white reflects the greatest amount of light—surely a fact of very great value to us, seeing that we spend much in a year on gas and electricity. These essentials, indeed, with coal, are heavy income taxes, and we ought therefore to choose those colours which give back a good percentage of artificial light. There is thrift in some colours, and waste in others. A white room of ordinary size will look cheerful with one electric lamp of sixteen candle-power, while two are scarcely enough for the same room when the walls are dark-toned. Experiments have given the following results :

Rough surfaces absorb more light than do smooth surfaces, but the latter are often less artistic than the former, texture being an entertainment to the eye.

A white wall *reflects* fifty per cent. of light while a red wall *absorbs* eighty-five per cent., giving us only fifteen.

Brown reflects about 12.5 per cent., while buff and corn-yellow give back 45 per cent.

Dark green walls are bad reflectors, 15 per cent. being their contribution of light ; whereas pale grey-greens are more luminous by far, giving us 40 per cent. of the rays of light which strike them.

Finally, coloured patterns absorb more light than do simple flat tints without patterns.

If, then, economy is a pressing need in your case, choose pale tints for your walls—cream white in preference to any other and shun pattern as a friend to gas companies and to other distributors of artificial gloom. Yes, gloom : for who is in high spirits after paying a quarterly bill for light ?

What next ? Well, colours have now to be looked at in their relation to the nerves of home life. Bright reds excite and irritate the nerves ; they should be used as we use powerful tonics. If you feel very tired, very jaded, gaze for a time at a glowing red, and its triumphing brilliance will gladden you, like a poppy in a field of ripe corn.

White, on the other hand, is not, like red, a symbol of fire, of war, of active energy ; it is an emblem of youthful purity. It rests the eye, it comforts the nerves. Blue is a cold colour.

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In light tints it is restful, but as they never look firm and solid they should be employed only in delicate soft materials, and not for carpets and wall-papers. Indeed, pale blue denotes infinite space, as in the blue sky. Pale blue walls never look solid.

Light vivid greens in the household arts are low-spiriting ; they bore the nerves of the mind ; while dark rich greens, peacock hues of green, give a feeling of security.

But in this matter, of course, personal liking has a very varied influence ; and further, personal liking is often the slave of memories and associations. A beautiful colour may be hateful to you because it sets you thinking of a ball-dress from which a young debutante jilted you thirty years ago. We look at things through a transforming medium of knowledge, recollection, sympathy, prejudice, and ignorance, so each one of us must choose those things which are not mixed up with our memories of unhappy or unpleasant events.

This said, another matter bids for attention. Among the illustrations you will find some very typical examples of panelled walls. Mr. Walter Cave employs deal painted white, and the panels are plain and square ; while Mr. Warren, in the hall of Estcourt House, has moulded and raised panels of a charming type peculiarly English. Though charming, they collect more dust than those which Mr. Cave has chosen.

However, panelled walls ought to be remembered by those of us who are about to build houses, and we may recommend them to the unlucky persons who have been tempted to buy that type of home which the building speculator offers for sale, so as to get rid of expenses for incessant repairs. Those houseowners are indeed to be pitied : yet they deserve their ill-fortune, for no layman should buy a house without written advice from a competent architect. Duped by the jerry-builder's rubbish, they must do the best they can with a very foolish bargain, as by improving their walls with panels laid over felt which make rooms warmer and freer from transmitted sounds. And the expense, too, is not very great. On this head some useful facts can be given, and I owe them to Mr. John Cash, F.R.I.B.A.

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Imagine a room 18ft. by 16ft. and 10ft. high ; the wainscot to be 8ft. high, leaving space for a frieze ; a plaster ceiling ribbed ; oak door and architraves, and a simple mantelpiece, also of American oak. As to window-frames and sashes, they will be of deal, not to be counted in our estimate ; but we shall need and put an oak architrave and window-boards. The least expensive panelling of American oak is one-and-sixpence a foot fixed in London, but it costs more than that for fitting into odd corners. American oak has certain well-known defects, but yet it looks comfortable in a room, and there's no *after* expense worth mentioning. Estimate :

	£	s.	d.
Panelling	41	0	0
Chimney-piece	2	0	0
Door and Architraves	4	0	0
Window-board and Architraves	1	10	0
Fixing	5	0	0
	£53 10 0		

The chimney-piece would be just a simple moulding and shelf fixed on the panelling. A dado of soft wood, properly painted, would cost as much as the cheap American oak.

A timber ceiling would be attractive ; but in flats it is troublesome to put up because flats are built as a rule with concrete floors, so a timber ceiling has to be planted on the concrete—a method unstructural as well as costly.

When oak is employed for wainscoting a wall, it is darkened by some artificial process, sometimes with liquid stain, sometimes with the fumes of liquid ammonia which penetrate to almost any depth. In the case of oak furniture these processes are bad ; oak will darken by exposure to the light and by careful rubbing ; but fumed oak for panelling is justified by practical reasons, perhaps, for it needs no other cleaning than that which is given to it with a duster. At the same time, if I had my choice, I should take deal and paint it white, rather than American oak fumed or stained. For this variety of oak is not an easy one to fume successfully, a point to be remembered ; and if you

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stain it with a liquid you not only spoil the grain, but darken the soft parts of the wood much more than the hard parts, producing blotchy contrasts of colour. Those contrasts become less unsightly if you make the whole wainscot very deep-toned ; but, of course, the deeper the tone, the less value it is to you as a reflector of light. All these considerations should be weighed before you buy American oak, rather than the Austrian variety, which costs more, but has finer markings and takes the fuming process well.

Still, whatever your background of wall may be, colour-problems have to be studied in their relation to it, and you need some broad rule to put you on your guard against mistakes in general effect. The best rule known to me is one that Sir Joshua Reynolds learnt from the greatest colourists among the Old Masters. Reynolds gives it in two passages, and both are worth quoting here :

“The predominant colours of a picture (and, no doubt, a room well-furnished is a picture) ought to be of a warm mellow kind, and no more cold colour should be introduced than will be just enough to serve as a ground or foil to set off and give value to the mellow colours ; *and never should it be a principal.* For this purpose a quarter of the picture will be sufficient ; those cold colours, whether blue or grey or green, are to be dispersed about the ground or surrounding parts of the picture, wherever it has the appearance of wanting such a foil, but sparingly employed in the masses of light.”

Again :

Reynolds lays it down as a general principle “that the masses of light in a picture be always of a mellow colour, and that the blue, the grey, or the green colours be kept always and entirely out of those masses, and be used only to support and set off those warm colours ; and for this purpose a small proportion of cold colour will be sufficient. Let this conduct be reversed, let the light be cold, and the surrounding colour warm, as we often see in the works of the Roman and Florentine painters, and it will be out of the power of art, even in the hands of Rubens and Titian, to make a picture splendid and harmonious.”

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Read these quotations several times. Their meaning, put in the baldest way, is this : that we must have unlimited confidence in warm mellow tints ; that cold hues, whether of green, or blue, or grey, though liked by the inartistic, are difficult to use attractively, even the Florentine masters failing ; when employed in a scheme of colour they should be foils to set off the ripe mellow tints.

Colours that chill and kill rich harmonies are very often found in that display of miscellaneous trinketry and bric-a-brac with which housewives are so fond of littering their mantel-pieces and little cabinets. It has been my lot to illustrate many rooms carefully chosen, and I have always given the same orders to my photographer : "Clear away nearly all the tiny ornaments, and don't splash your negatives with a litter of family photographs placed here and there all over a room, sometimes on ledges around the walls." These directions were followed as diplomatically as was possible, yet the photographs as a rule were still too crowded with oddments of inutility. The exceptions always were in the homes of architects and painters.

Some experts have an eye for colour so true and good that they ought to be almost as proud of it as peacocks would be of a dozen tails apiece. Mr. Frank Brangwyn is an expert of that fortunate kind : and so it is well that we should see what matters guide him in decorative painting and design. Some years ago he planned a bedroom with its furniture, and painted for it a frieze and panels. This work has been illustrated many times, but something fresh can always be learnt from it, for bedrooms are usually kept at a great distance from Art. Being private rooms they are free from the circulating criticisms of our friends and visitors ; that is why they do not often show themselves to the best advantage. Some mistakes in their equipment and decoration are stereotyped, as Mr. Brangwyn and other artists have pointed out. How often have you seen a bedroom which, as soon as you opened its door, delighted you with a quiet airiness, a look of airy space bright with silent warm colour ?

Usually a bedroom is a place of furniture, with a fussy background of florid wall-paper. It does not banish sleep from your

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pillow, but you would be sorry indeed if illness compelled you to look at it for a week or two. The first important thing that a bedroom should not do is to irritate the sick, as with invitations to count the athletic forms in a pattern that seems to waltz or to play at leap-frog around the walls. *Keep patterns away from bedrooms*: this little maxim is as good as the literary one that bids us never to hunt a noun with five or six adjectives. You decide, too, I hope, that the furniture must not take from the room more air-space than is positively necessary; so the craftsmanship must be of the finest structural merit, so that it may give with a reasonably small quantity of wood the largest amount of convenience and strength.

The bed itself is the chief article of furniture. What are your opinions concerning it? Have you ever thought about the practical characteristics essential to its utility? There is not space enough here to describe the evolution of beds from the Saxon pallet of straw laid on a bench to the curtained four-poster richly carved. But a hint or two from the past will help us to look at modern beds from two points of view, one romantic and artistic, the other utilitarian.

During the ages of chivalry and of religious faith, beds were touched and charmed with idealism. Mr. W. R. Lethaby describes one with the underside of the canopy having upon it an Annunciation; and this the romance element of design was often beautifully secular as well as finely scriptural. Consider, too, the four-poster—now a useless thing of excellent workmanship: useless, because it is at war against modern science. The curtains around it gather dust, flutter microbes on to the pillow and counterpane, and not only prevent a free circulation of fresh air, but keep within narrow limits the breath exhaled during sleep. But all these points, unforgivable in a modern bed, are easy to explain in the life of the four-poster. For this bed in its youth belonged to a time when rooms were big and chimneys unusual or inefficient; keen draughts were common; and the cold indoors during the winter shivers to this day through the literature of the Middle Ages. So beds were raised higher and higher above the draughty floor, and posts were made for

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side curtains and to support a canopy ; these things were all utilitarian, but art soon began to enrich them in many enjoyable fashions. At present, though, we notice their handicraft and forget their earlier story of common sense pitted against wintry discomforts.

If criticism of household art is to be worth anything at all—a peppercorn, let us say—it must spy out the practical needs and defects. Mr. Brangwyn, for example, when he designed a bed, preferred wood for his material. Why? There are two reasons. Wood is quietly beautiful when it is chosen with care and finished with skill, while metal bedsteads—and notably those of brass—attract far too much attention ; they are out of key with fresh and simple harmonies of colour. More than that : they ask us to believe that a bedroom is just a bedstead, when it ought to be a restful picture with pleasant furniture in it.

That is a prime necessity ; but there are other essential things of a minor kind. What distance should there be from the floor to the under part of a bed ? Mr. Brangwyn decided that a bed must not be low enough to tempt a maid-servant to neglect the duty of sweeping under it ; nor yet so high that the space between the mattress and the floor may be used for the storage of boxes and the accumulation of dust. So the height of a bed is a discipline to servants and to householders. Look under your own bed, not for a burglar, but for a portmanteau or a hat-box ; and ask a scientific friend to examine the dust on it and to tell you how many potential diseases exist in thronged microbes under your bedstead.

Ah, *que de choses dans un menuet !* cried Marcel, the great dancing master, and ah, what things in the treatment of a simple room, cries an artist with the enthusiasm of his calling ; such variety within simplicity, such common sense, and proportion, and beauty and usefulness. But to all of this, very often, the soul of a household is dull, blind, utterly heedless. Mr. Brangwyn worked for weeks and months at his bedroom ; while the ordinary layman sleeps as comfortably in bad art as he does in his spring bedstead.

He is untroubled by the vexations of discordant colour, by the

BY PERMISSION OF W. E. STEERS, F.S.O.

Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin, Architects

VIEW IN A HOUSE AT CATERHAM



ROOMS AND THEIR DECORATION

repetitions of ugly and tiresome forms. But if we were asked to choose for a bedroom a wall decoration, what should we say? What would you think and select?

In Mr. Brangwyn's design there is painting, not hung up in gold frames against a background of wall-paper, but made to look like a structural part of the wall itself. That is what we need, surely: a painted frieze and other decorative work in colour, not merely attractive as painting, but fresh and spring-like as befits a bedroom. Pictures they may be; only, of course, they must not start out from the wall or make holes in the wall; their duty is to keep their place in a modest manner. Mr. Brangwyn's subjects were taken from out-door life in the country; these he treated lightly, fancifully, his colour ranging through pale blues into silver-greys. And he divided the walls into compartments, and within each he put a decorative picture.

Yes, but then, but then . . . What wood did he find best for his purpose? Not walnut: it was too heavy in tone for a bright bedroom. Oak? No: it would have looked too heavy in mass. Satinwood also, though right in tint, had one defect: its refinement is glossy, as though intended for the boudoirs of soubrettes of the first fashion. With age and wear and tear, satinwood improves and becomes delightful. When young it is inferior to pearwood, the wood chosen by Mr. Brangwyn for his bedroom panelling and furniture. It has a beautiful texture, its tone is pale and warm, it reflects a sufficient quantity of artificial light, it ages well taking a rich patina; and it makes a pleasant framing for decorative pictures and painted friezes.

Pearwood ought to be used far more often than it is for bedroom furniture. There is no difficulty in finding a background to suit it. Dove-grey wall-papers are all that it needs in ordinary homes under our system of short leases. Oh, the short lease—the long three-years tenure that most of us have in our dwellings! We mean to outgrow these poor, temporary homes; and many of us encourage the making of bad furniture because we feel that we are not settled yet, but live as paying guests under the rule of landlords' agreements or disagreements. Mr. Halsey Ricardo has on this point something good to say:—

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“Our lease expires after so many years and then we shall need quite a different class of furniture ; consequently we purchase articles that have only sufficient life in them to last the brief period of our occupation, and are content to abide by the want of appropriateness or beauty, in the clear intention of some day surrounding ourselves with objects that shall be joys to us for the remainder of our life.”

True, no doubt ; but it is evil and wicked treason to our ignorance to make such printed confidences to the whole world, that very indiscreet father confessor. Folly should not be advertised. To buy furniture that will not last is worse than a crime ; it is an absurd act, feeble-minded and wasteful. Ill-spent money *is* at all times a double loss : and householders should keep in mind the fact that the second-hand value of second-rate household things dwindles with great rapidity, as young widows learn to their cost at auctions. Even good furniture may not be a secure investment for hardly-earned money, because our age has no traditional taste, and the impetuous frivolity of changing fashions condemns many a fine movement in true work. Still, the good in art outlives the bad ; and to that extent at least, setting aside the comfort and the pleasure that we owe to it, its possession means a wise investment of capital.

But Mr. Ricardo draws me up at this point ; he fears the demon of novelty, the lust that hankers after gaudy and expensive fashions ; and this, of course, makes for degeneration, not for progress. “Each decade sees a new style, and the furniture that we have acquired in the exercise of our experienced taste will in all probability be discarded by the impetuous purism of the succeeding generation.” Moreover, “we are suffering from a catholicity of taste that sees good in everything, or has an indifferent and tepid appreciation of all and sundry, especially if consecrated by age.”

What of that, though ? With the help of symptoms diseases are attacked—and often cured. The only thing we have to do, after all, is to choose a style that is good, and then keep faithful to it for life. If the young find fault with us, and say that our tastes are prehistoric, stranded with the simple great ones gone,

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no harm is done ; youth will have its fling, and find the most precious gems in mare's-nests and air-castles. Youth at the present time cannot read Dickens, nor enjoy Thackeray, nor learn from Scott : it is bored by Fielding, Browning, Tennyson ; and even that literary god of a few years ago, Ibsen, even he is behind the scampering wild criticisms so natural to the young and ardent. With age traditions grip the mind, and the perennial good finds a home in new thought.

That is a fact for householders to remember. Youth in the early days of Victoria found nothing to admire in the best English furniture of the eighteenth century ; all of it was stale, flat, and unprofitable ; anything was better, even chairs so heavy that many a woman could not lift them ; and families of position got rid of their Chippendale, Sheraton, and Heppelwhite, giving them to servants as wedding-gifts. But now the pendulum of fashion swings away from new work to the old, so that our own present-day Sheratons and Chippendales wait patiently to be recognized. Do you know the work of Mr. Gimson, for example ?

Still, we must pass on : and since the main thing in life is to keep a roof over our heads, let us not forget—THE CEILING.

It has been called the sky of architecture, and in most modern houses it is a dusty-white sky threatening a downfall. We do not see how it is held up in its position, nor can we do much under our short leases to put a look of strength into its sheet-like monotony. Bad ceilings tempt us to make permanent improvements, but tenants of three years cannot afford to squander gifts on landlords. But they can afford to cover up the hideous centre-flowers, or to make a ceiling presentable with a simple paper such as Mr. Walter Crane has designed. For a few guineas an architect of position will give advice, necessary advice, too, for a ceiling covers so much space in a room and is affected so much by the quantity of light which it receives, that amateurs should not meddle with its decoration. A distinguished architect, the late G. T. Robinson, gives the following help :—

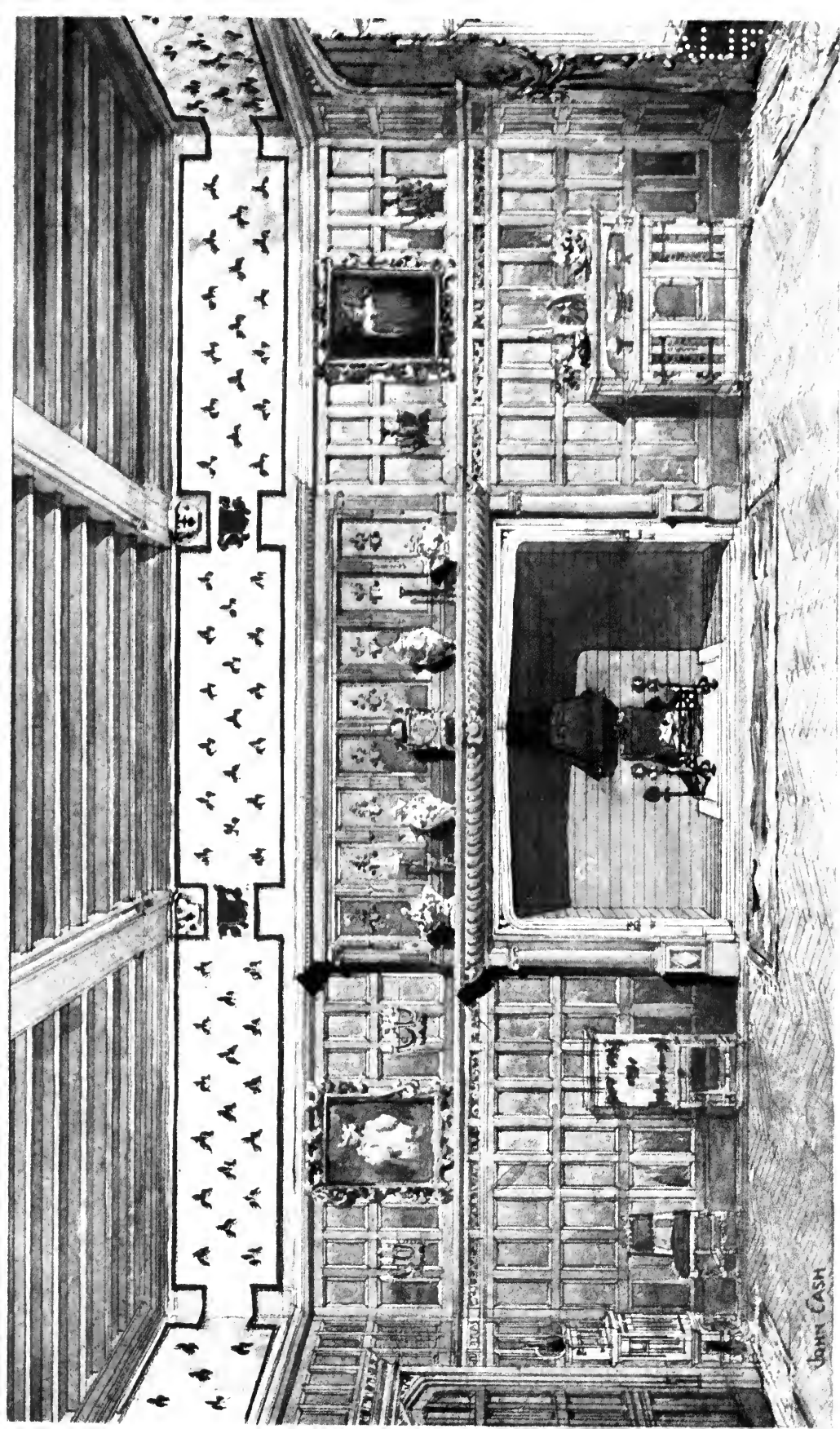
“ If you have one of those terrible ceilings of centre-flowers and angles, and have also, which sometimes occurs, as obdurate

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and terrible a landlord, you can cover up the former—unfortunately, not the latter also—with a canvas plaster coating, and hide, if you are unable to destroy, the abomination. The only thing to insist upon in a new ceiling of this kind is to have it especially designed for you and a guarantee given you by the manufacturer that the moulds shall not be re-used. It is true it will cost you something more, but you will have the satisfaction of knowing (under a long lease) that it is your own copyright and that you will not be nauseated by finding it reproduced in inferior manner in whole rows by jerry-building speculators, who get the model cheap and pay only for the casting. This insensate reproduction is a thing to ban and to avoid. . . .

“ Yet there are ready-made, mechanically-produced expedients which are good enough where circumstances prevent the use of the higher forms of decoration, where ephemeral decoration only is needed, and for the less important rooms in a house. Some of Mr. Scott Morton's embossed canvas patterns are very suitable for this purpose, and by the judicious use of a few moulded wood-ribs effective ceilings can be made from them. Embossed papers, Anaglypta, Lignamur, and many other low-relief products are obtainable. Japanese paper, which combines both colour and relief, can be very advantageously used with bamboo or other mouldings, and the gold ground is very effective in a somewhat dark room. Flock paper, painted in one tone and rolled with another, so as to pick out the ornamental pattern in a lighter or a darker tint, produces a good effect. But in all these cases you should do something to relieve the monotony of a large expanse of reticulated ornament, either by breaking up the surface by broad divisions into panels or constructing a broad border of another pattern ” (Magazine of Art, August, 1892, p. 357).

These hints are all excellent. To complete them, we may borrow a good idea from the French, who, unlike ourselves, treat the cornice not as a portion of the ceiling but as the summit of the walls, a sort of capital upon which the ceiling rests for support. This idea is logical and useful, so let your cornice be of the same colour as the skirting, and let that colour make a contrast with your ceiling.



SCHEME OF DECORATION FOR A SITTING-ROOM

John Cash, Architect. London

REPRODUCED FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGN

ROOMS AND THEIR DECORATION

A frieze properly treated adds great value to ceiling decoration, but do not choose any frieze which is sold with pattern-book wall-papers. They are as a rule more absurd than is any other trade work which is made to-day. No subject is too inappropriate. You will be lucky if you find in two or three dozen anything not bad enough for a dungeon or a prison cell. Shopkeepers and their servants, the manufacturers, do not know that a frieze should be either a plain band of flat colour or else a work of decorative art designed and carried out by a master mind and hand. The difficulties to be solved need a special training and much practice : and tradesmen, unfortunately, are led into error by a bit of advice which William Morris gave them without enough explanation.

“Do not be afraid of large patterns,” said Morris ; “if properly designed they are more restful to the eye than small ones : on the whole, a pattern where the structure is large and the details much broken up is the most useful. Large patterns are not necessarily startling ; this comes more of violent relief of the figure from the ground, or inharmonious colouring : beautiful and logical form relieved from the ground by well-managed contrast or gradation, and lying flat on the ground, will never weary the eye. Very small rooms, as well as very large ones, look best ornamented with large patterns, whatever you do with the middling-sized ones.”

Experts understand what Morris meant, but that advice to tradesmen and householders was poison undiluted ; it was like bidding them to mend their failing health with arsenical tonics of their own prescription. Monstrous patterns began to grow with rank luxuriance. There were poppies every bit as large as saucepans, and a few of them made a frieze. There were roses big enough to be worn as button-holes by giants sixty feet high, and trellis friezes were made with them. Such absurdities could not fail to bring about a reaction. To-day the “popular frieze,” so called, is a trivial attempt to print by machine on paper some pictorial scene for children, minors and semifatuous persons of both sexes. It may be a frieze of kittens, or of gooseberries and cucumbers, or of lambs and hawthorn trees, or of Falstaff’s

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peppercorn with a brewer's horse, or of Canadian squatters trying to get rid of their wives by tobogganning down a waterfall in canoes.

These subjects and many others are all quite clear to you when you look at them on slips bound together in a pattern-book ; but when they are pasted up around a wall under the cornice, and therefore at a distance from your eyes, you begin to wonder why so much money has been spent on inappropriate designs, that are also quite out of scale with their surroundings. *Out of scale*, note with care ; for the great difficulty in all decoration is to find the *Via Media* of size. Your frieze, that is to say, must not be too assertive or too insignificant ; it must keep its place along the top of your walls and yet be intelligible and interesting when looked at from a chair.

The best advice to be given here to laymen is this : Do not experiment with patterned friezes ; seek professional advice—and pay for it. And let me add to this one word of caution as regards the delight in big patterns expressed by William Morris. It is very easy for a pattern to be too large for a small room ; then it dwarfs the room and jumps out beyond the furniture, so that the sense of scale between walls and furniture is entirely lost. The room has no background ; it is all pattern. It is like an orchestra that prevents the singers' voices from being heard ; or, again, it resembles a political meeting with too many suffragettes in a mood of conquest and victory.

Ah, que de choses dans la decoration des chambres ! What are the humble inexpert to do ? Well, if they cannot afford to buy professional advice, they may yet be able to get it by the gentle art of begging ; and if that cannot be managed (it needs a good dinner and much diplomacy at times), there is the safety of discretion in the guidance of common sense. Put the patterned samples at the far end of your room and then look at them from the door. If the designs are very distinct, they are too big ; when you feel that you must examine them near at hand, they are too small and trivial.

One expert has said “ *that the room probably does not exist in small houses that will bear upon its wall a dado, filling, and frieze.*”

ROOMS AND THEIR DECORATION

Filling is a trade expression, and means the paper or decoration between the dado and frieze."

That criticism may stand, not as a rule without many exceptions, but as sound advice to the inexpert who cannot afford to call in a specialist. The "filling" is a good place for pictures; it needs nothing more than a uniform tint of paint or a paper or fabric of good colour and interesting texture; when these points are attended to and the pictures are in scale with the room and its wall surface, a dado looks well below and a frieze above. Nor is the reason of this far to seek. When a wall-decoration stretches from skirting to cornice, it surfeits the eye, it makes the room look smaller; it wants the relief of horizontal lines, and these we get with a frieze or a dado or with both. A wainscot dado and a broad frieze painted above it are delightful—if we own the houses we live in. If not, then pictures will take the place of painted decoration, pictures carefully chosen, so that we may get those which shine out upon us in the dim winter light of British towns. Oil-paintings we do not choose, because under those conditions they are dark and heavy, unlike water-colours which have a bright sweet look however uncertain the light may be. Oil-painters are at a great disadvantage now that our great towns grow larger and dimmer.

Yet, as a rule, water-colours are sold for smaller sums of money than oils of equal merit. It is hard upon our aquarellists, but comforting to British householders. Very good water-colours may be *found* in certain shops and bought for two or three guineas, sometimes for considerably less. I have a signed sketch by David Wilkie that cost me fifteen shillings unframed.

Etchings, too, look well in town houses, and there is no need to choose those which market competition has "boomed" into fanciful prices. On the contrary, we should welcome the changing tides of art's wayward fashions, for they throw aside as useless many forms of beautiful work, and these are worth finding as a hobby. A thrifty collector is either in advance of his time buying excellence not yet understood, or behind his time choosing the forgotten merit that awaits a renaissance. Only the very rich should buy fashionable art.

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I have now shown you, I think, the principal means by which even householders with thin purses can enjoy comfortable rooms well-furnished; and I have only one general piece of advice to underline. Let the inexpert doubt their own judgments and trust professional opinion. Failure is very easy, and success never comes to those that do not know the technique of their trade.



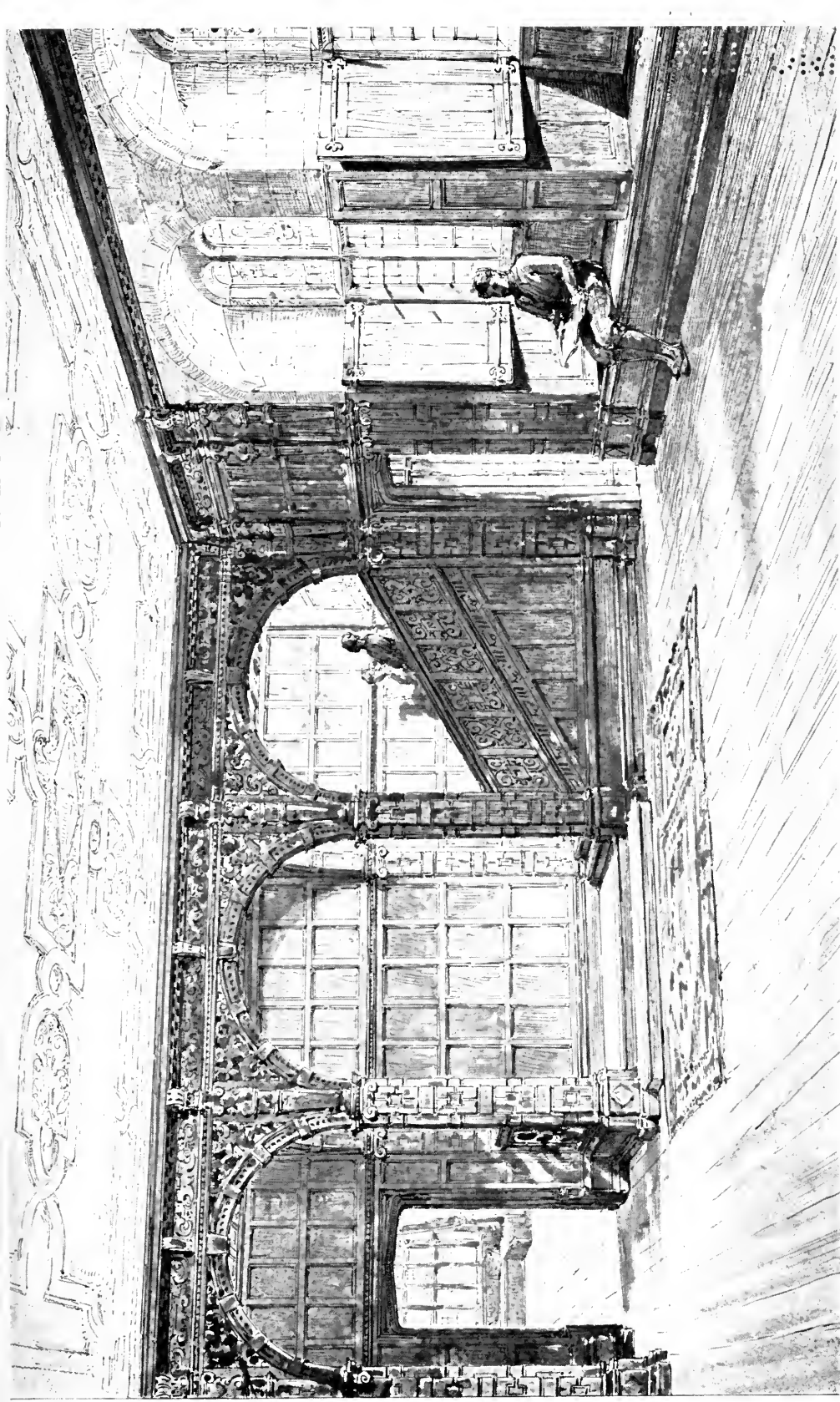
HOUSE AT FOUR OAKS, NEAR BIRMINGHAM. BUILT OF RED SANDSTOCK BRICKS, THE ROOFING OF RED TILES

W. H. Bidlake, M.A., Architect



ESTCOURT HOUSE, KENSINGTON PALACE GARDENS, LONDON. VIEW OF THE HALL, SHOWING THE OAK STAIRCASE AND DOORS, THE RAISED PANNELLING, AND THE BLACK AND WHITE MARBLE FLOOR

E. P. Warren, F.R.I.B.A., F.S.A., Architect, London



DRAWING BY ERNEST GEORGE OF THE HALL IN EDGEWORTH MANOR, GLOUCESTER. THE SCREEN AT THE END IS OF OAK AND THE CARVING WAS DONE BY J. B. KNOX

Ernest George and Yeates, Architects, London

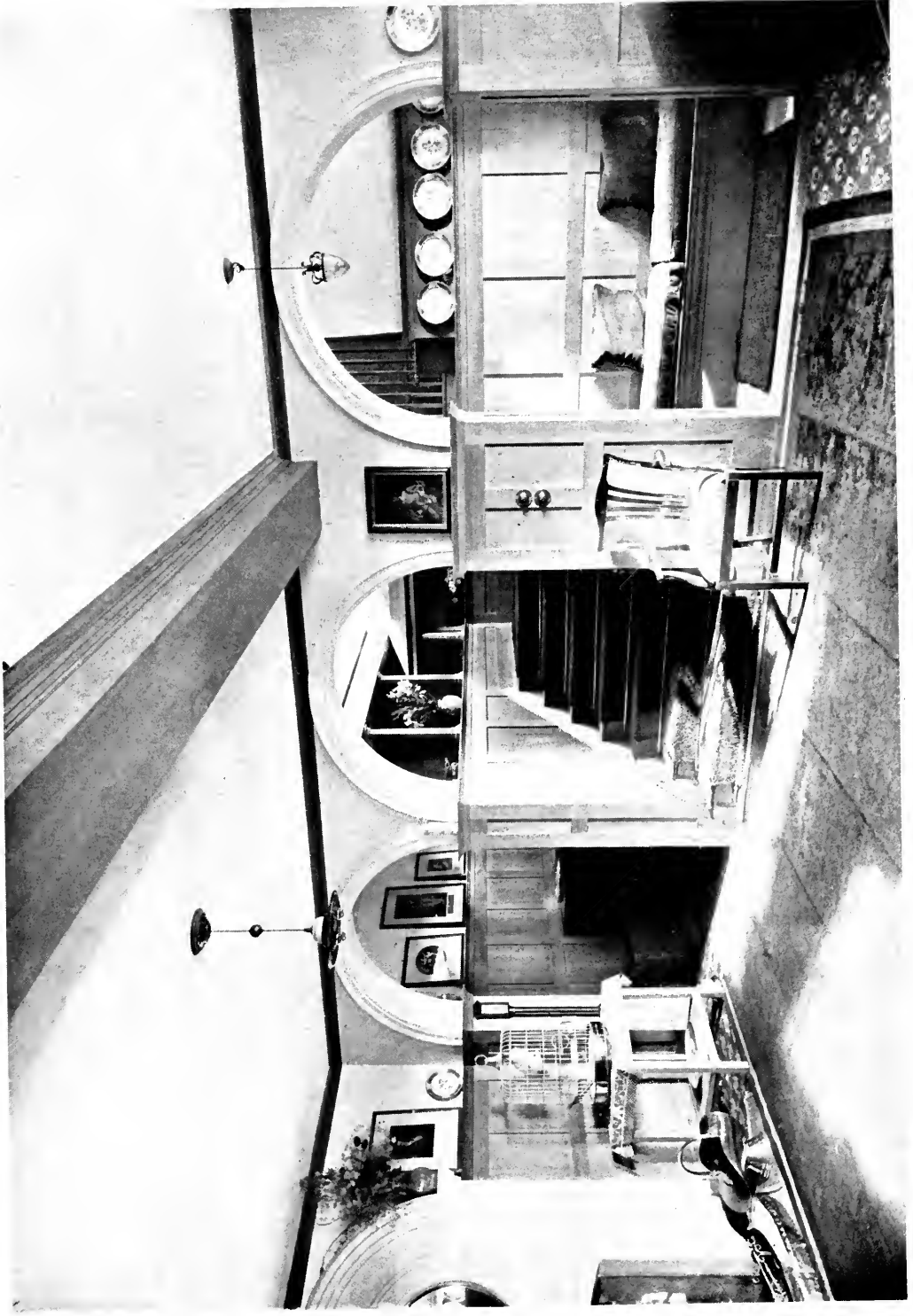
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HOOKEREL. WOKING. SURREY

VIEW OF THE MAIN STAIRCASE

Horace Field, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



VIEW OF THE HALL AT NEW PLACE, HASLEMERE, THE HOME OF A. M. METHUEN, ESQ. MATERIALS: OAK AND WHITE PLASTER-WORK, THE FIREPLACE OF PORTLAND STONE AND COPPER, THE CARPET HAND-WOVEN AND GREY-GREEN IN COLOUR

C. F. A. Vovsey, Architect, London



THE DRAWING-ROOM, 16, UPPER BERKELEY STREET, LONDON, W.

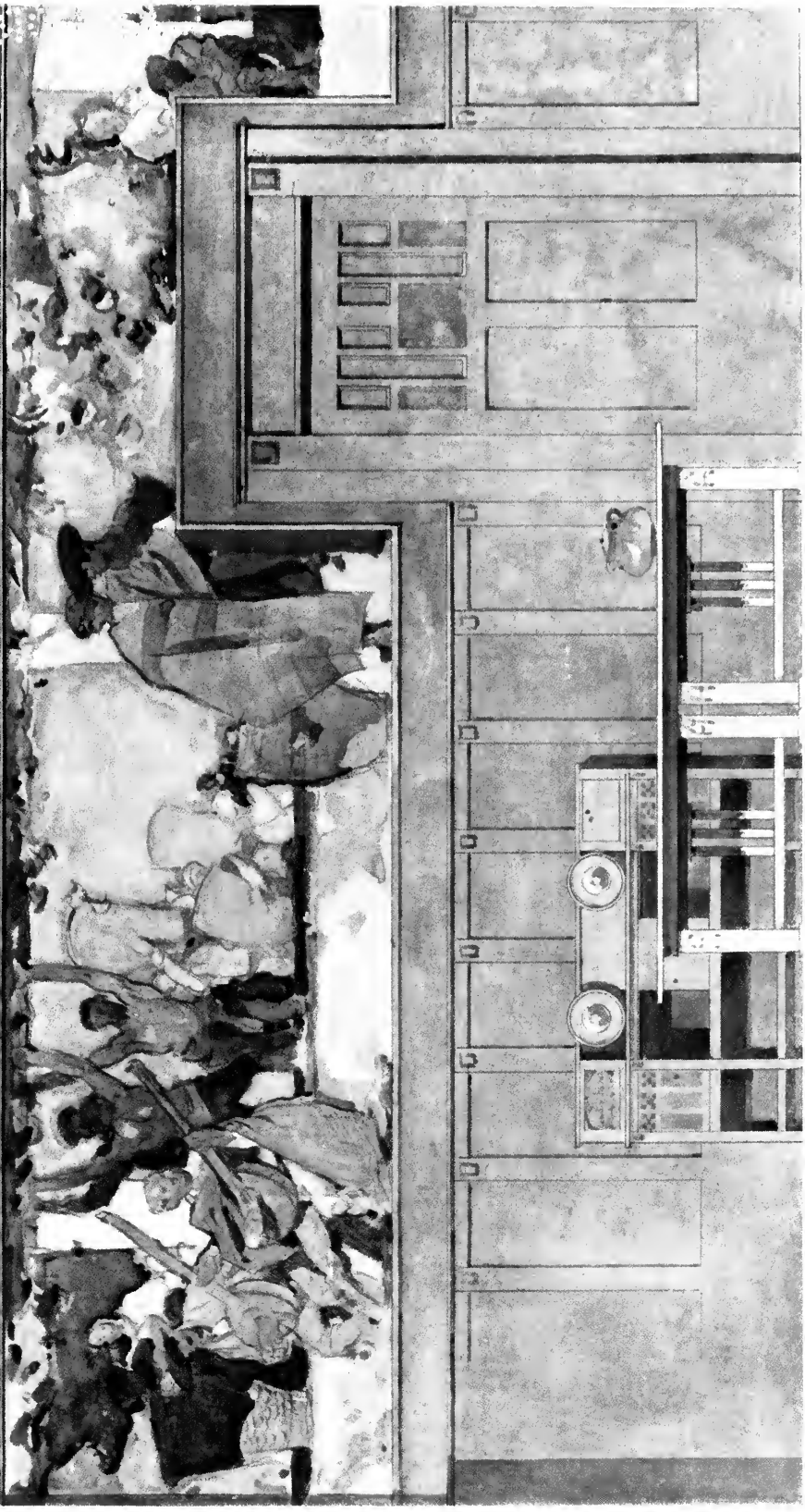
REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF EDWIN BECKSTEIN, ESQ.

Walter Cave, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



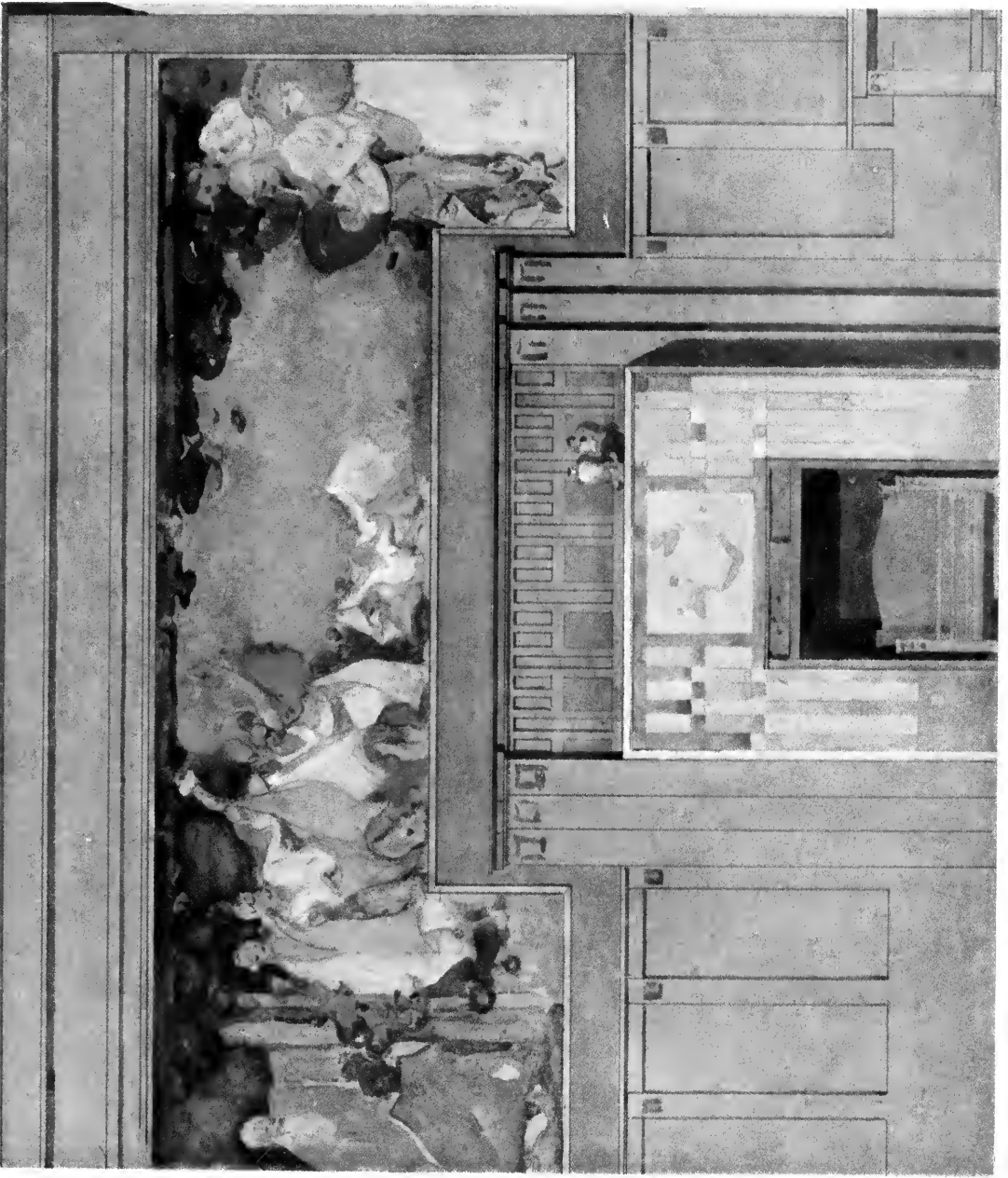
THE DRAWING-ROOM, KINGSBURGH GARDENS, GLASGOW. THE SCHEME OF COLOUR IS GOLDEN YELLOW, WITH LOW-KEYED
 BLUES AND GREENS IN THE HANGINGS, FURNITURE AND CARPET. THE WOODWORK IS CANADIAN POPLAR STAINED
 IN SHADES OF PINK WHITE AND OCHRE; THE WALLS ARE HUNG WITH JUTE TISSUE HAVING VERTICAL BANDS IN TWO SHADES OF
 GOLDEN YELLOW; THE PLASTER CEILING AND CORNICE ARE BY MR. BANKART, THE FIRE PLACE BY MR. LONGDEN, WHILE
 THE ELECTRIC FITTINGS WERE DESIGNED BY THE ARCHITECT AND CARRIED OUT BY THE BIRMINGHAM GUILD.

A. N. Paterson, M.A., A.R.I.B.A., Architect, Glasgow



SKETCH FOR A PORTION OF THE DINING-ROOM. PALAZZO REZZONI 6, VENICE. THE WOODWORK IS OF GREY OAK INLAID WITH EBONY AND BOX. A PAINTED FRIEZE

Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A., Painter and Designer, London



SKETCH FOR A PORTION OF THE DINING-ROOM. PALAZZO REZZONICO, VENICE. MATERIALS: GREY OAK INLAID WITH EBONY,
PAINTED PANELS. THE FIREPLACE OF MARBLE AND STEEL

Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A., Painter and Designer, London

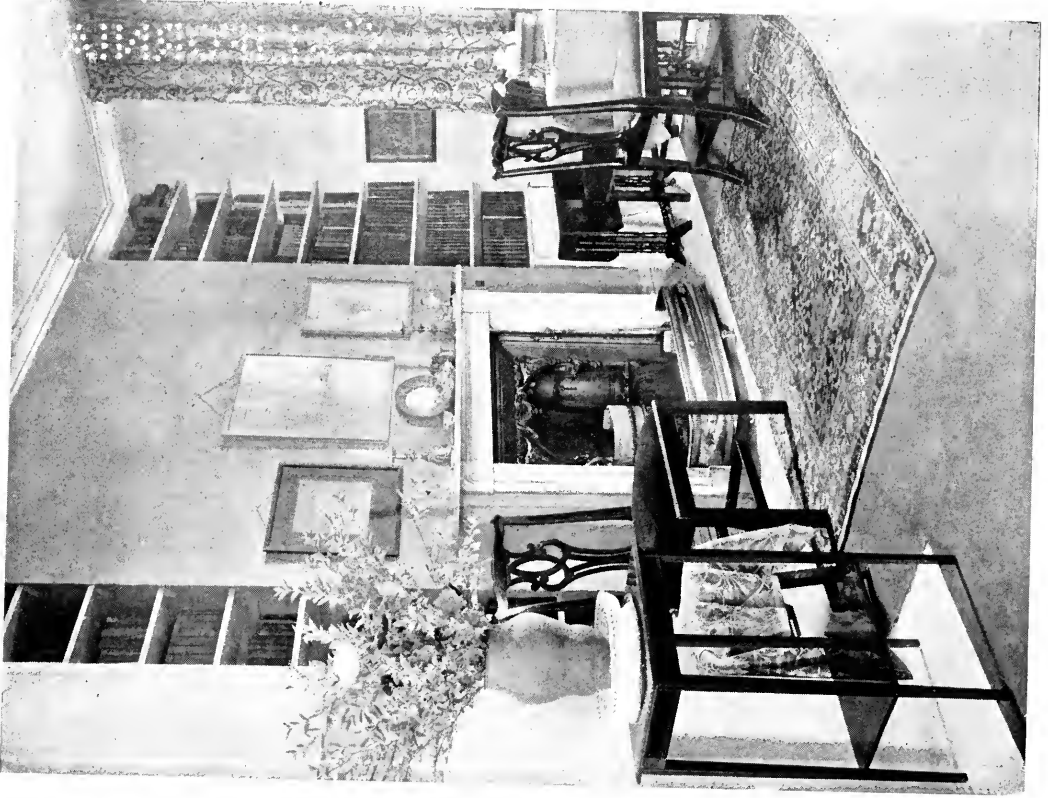


VIEW OF THE PARLOUR, BISHOPSBARNS, YORK, WITH A CEILING OF MODELLED PLASTER BY G. P. BANKART. THE FLOOR IS OF OAK AND THE PANELLING OF PINE.

Walter H. Brierley, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, York



THE DINING-ROOM IN A SMALL LONDON HOUSE



EXAMPLES OF SIMPLE TREATMENT

THE DRAWING-ROOM IN A SMALL LONDON HOUSE



SCALERS HILL, COBHAM, KENT

R. W. Schultz, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London

VIEW OF THE LIVING-ROOM IN ENGLISH OAK



PORTION OF THE DRAWING-ROOM AT REDHILL, HEADINGLEY, LEEDS, WITH A CEILING DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY G. P. BANKART
MATERIALS: WHITE WOODWORK, GREY-GREEN WALL-PAPER AND A FLOOR OF OAK

Francis W. Bedford and Sydney D. Kitson, Architects

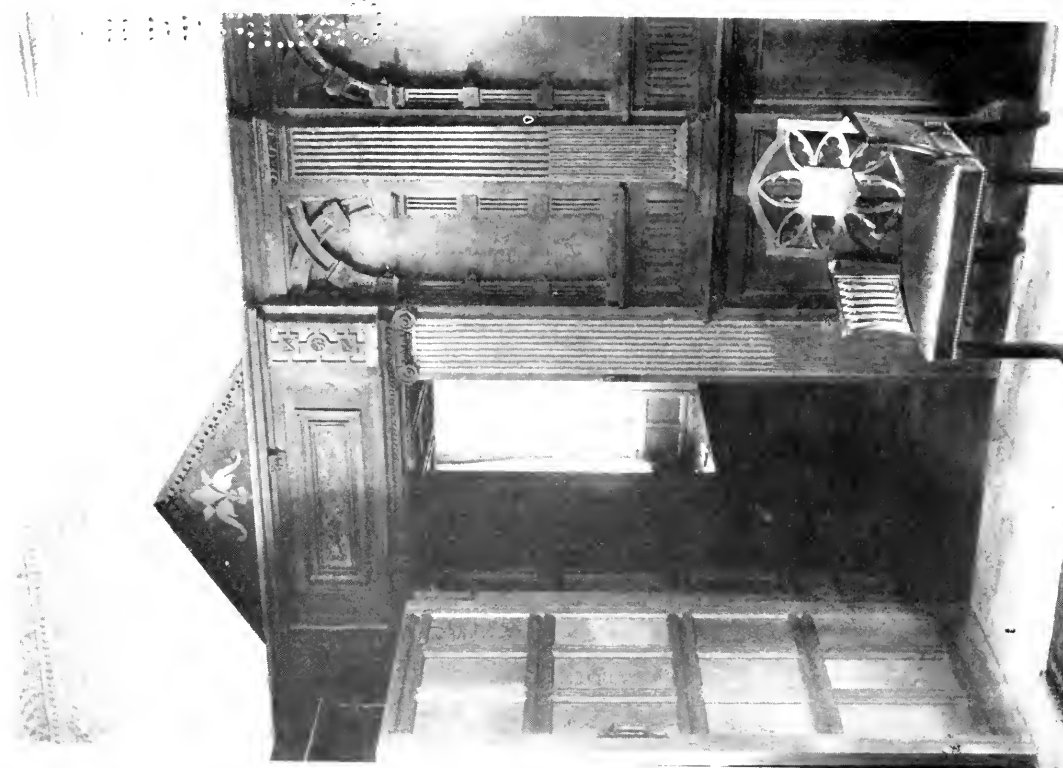


A MODERN BEDROOM WITH A CHERRYWOOD SUITE OF FURNITURE AND THE WALLS ENRICHED WITH A PAINTED FRIEZE AND OTHER DECORATIVE PAINTINGS. THE ROOM AND ITS CONTENTS WERE DESIGNED EXPRESSLY FOR E. DAVIS, ESQ.

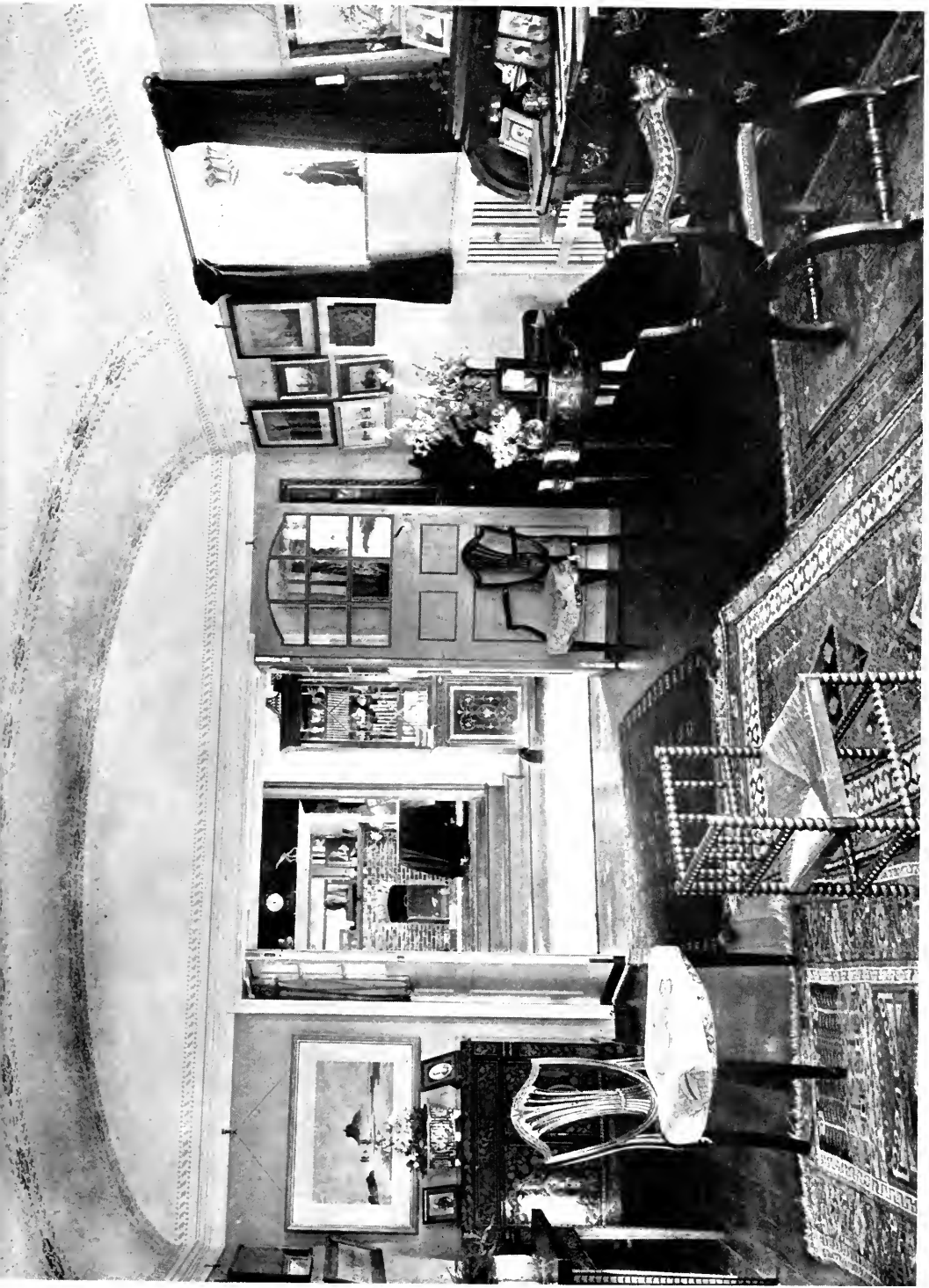
Frank Brungwyn, A.R.A., Painter and Designer, London



PICKENHAM HALL, NORFOLK



OAK PANNELLING AND DOOR IN THE GREAT HALL, AT TISSINGTON HALL,
WITH A BEAUTIFUL OLD CHAIR



WALWOOD, SURREY. VIEW FROM THE DRAWING-ROOM ACROSS THE HALL INTO THE DINING-ROOM. THE DRAWING-ROOM HAS A BARREL CEILING OF PAINTED PLASTER, THE WALLS ARE COLOURED, ALL THE FLOORS AND STEPS ARE OF JARRAH WOOD. THE DINING-ROOM IS ON THE LEVEL OF THE KORRIDOR, SOME THREE STEPS UP

E. Guy Dawber, Architect, London



THE SMOKING-ROOM, 78, UPPER BERKELEY STREET, LONDON
Walter Cave, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



EAST GATE HOTEL, OXFORD

VIEW OF THE COFFEE ROOM.

E. P. Warren, F.R.I.B.A., F.S.A., Architect, London

CHAPTER NINE

FLATS AND FLATS

A lady of distinction has published an attack on dwelling-flats. Rumour says that she is fond of archery, and in criticism, too, her arrows are cleverly loosed. She does not fire at long rovers, but gets close to her mark, and hits the clout from a comforting distance of a few yards. And the subject of flats happens to be such a very big target. It was put up for easy practice by those speculative builders who tout for quick returns on capital ill-spent. So the recent craze for flats dwindles away, after discrediting a new system of English home life, which ought to have been made useful to the community in general, and to the Middle Class in particular.

The feeble Middle Class ! Think of its lot. It is passed like corn between the two millstones of trade. The upper stone is labelled Capital, the nether one is Labour ; and to them the poor Corn Class-pawns itself—to be turned by their joint efforts into flour and waste. Now, unless we remember this character of the middle class, we can never understand the failure of the flat system in England, for jerry-builders, you see, are not afraid

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of the least warlike portion of the community. Capital they respect and adore, Labour they fear and debauch, while the ineffectual Middle Class appeals to them as granaries do to millers, or flowers to beekeepers.

To say that is not to say over much. "There are many blocks of flats in my neighbourhood," said a famous architect, "but scarcely one in which I would live rent free. Yet large rents are asked—and asked from those who have to work deuced hard to keep up appearances. Fancy paying from £80 to £100 a year for a set of five or six tiny rooms separated by eaves-dropping walls!"

That hits one nail on the head.

Owners of flats—flats for little incomes—struggle hard to keep up the rents; they never admit that those rents were chosen years ago during a headlong fashion, a boom, which to-day is lost in that big limbo where dead crazes go. And again, flat-owners, in their efforts to impose upon their tenants, are helped by that grasping middleman known as a House Agent, who spreads himself in stereotyped repetition all over a town or city. He has no legal responsibility towards his clients, seemingly. His one aim in life is to send up rents, for he lives on percentages; yet he pretends to be equally helpful to landlords and tenants. He has solved the problem of serving two masters—with profit to landlords and to himself. When will ratepayers get tired of this fellow? When will they give him up? Are they not yet sick of being told about the extortion of *ground* landlords, the exorbitant rates and taxes, the cost of maintenance, and so forth, as if the trade of running flats happened to be the only business at all affected by those things? Besides, what necessary of life should be allowed to cripple the average income of any class?

And consider this other point also. Flats for little incomes—for I am not speaking of the others, designed by first-rate architects—are built not merely in accordance with a falling birth-rate, but in far anticipation of a time when the birth-rate of the middle class will be 0 per cent. "No children, please:" this is the motto of at least ninety flats in a hundred; and for each of the

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exceptional ten you will have to pay a rent ranging from £200 a year to £3000. One expects a jerry-builder to be foolish and dishonest ; those qualities are his trade ; but when his plans are as unfriendly to children as Dean Swift was, he invites from us *too much* tolerant contempt. For remember, his war against childhood is more effective by far than Swift's could ever be—except among cannibals.

The Dean entered the nursery with the pleasure of an ogre. "A young healthy child, well-nursed," he wrote, "is, at a year old, a most delicious, nourishing and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled ; and I make no doubt it will equally serve in a *ragoût*." A baby is enough for "two dishes at an entertainment of friends ; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish." His reverence called that "a Modest Proposal ;" but his hatred for little ones, repeated in a hundred passages, had no effect on the nursery's population. And how he would have raged could he have foreseen the jerry-builder's successful fight against childhood ! To be inferior to such a scamp might have hurt him more than did the loss of his heart's desire, a bishopric.

I have known several typical jerry-builders, and each explained the aims common to all, arguing with perfect logic and common sense. "I object to children," he began, "because they do me harm as a landlord. The hubbub they make in a flat annoys my other tenants, quiet folk without encumbrances, or literary fellows who can't get ideas if you disturb them with housekeeping facts, let alone noises. When youngsters play at romps for a few hours in flat 1, I hear of it for days from flats 2, 3, 4 and 5. Such letters too ! And I remember them for business reasons. Then, of course, the mischief done by children is more than a joke, costing a precious penny, I can tell you. Am I then to melt at the thoughts of childhood ? Am I to be a Mr. Quiverful in my building plans ? Nonsense ! And here's another point. You ask me for two reception-rooms *at least*, with a bath-room and a certain number of bed-rooms, also a kitchen to each flat, as if you preferred to waste coal rather than come to some cooking arrangement with your neighbours. Very well. You give

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me your recipe of household comfort, and I do the best I can to please you—thankful that you don't *ask* for a nursery. No would-be tenant ever does, somehow. Yet you complain. The rooms are too small for children, you say, when common sense cries out to you that your wants are unreasonable, because the rooms you insist upon having are too many for the total area of space."

That is how the jerry-builder argues, throwing all responsibility on to the crushed middle class. It is *we* who lead him into error! It is our spendthrift snobbery that compels him to do bad jobs! If we were content with fewer rooms of a larger size, the jerry-builder would be a saint of industrial competition!

That is what he implies by his arguments. There's no need for us to believe him, of course. He throws dust in our eyes, but in the dust some little bits of gold sparkle. How could he defend himself at all if he did not throw at us a few home-truths? His description of what small incomes demand from a landlord—so many rooms dovetailed together over a tiny stretch of floor—is entirely right. We ask for too much and get too little in too much. True democrats, we try to cut a lordly figure in a few feet of space when we need an equal number of yards.

It is equally true that a vast amount of coal is wasted day by day on superabundant kitchen fires. When we think of a building with a hundred flats, for example, and remember that three times a day a hundred maids cook meals at a hundred different fires, who is not astonished by the daily loss of money on coal and on labour too? A Common Hall in each block of flats, where good meals could be bought at a reasonable price, would be a boon indeed to all narrow incomes. True, there are risks here, as in all adaptations of hotel principles to home life. The management might be lax or might try to earn too much profit; and further, in a co-operative system of housekeeping, women are apt to be very critical, as if annoyed by the slipping away of authority from their own hands. And then, you know, there are those eye-criticisms of dress—accompanied by whispers, perhaps—that play such a waspish part in some women's intercourse with one another. Mrs. A. might not wish to dine in hall, her gown

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being out of date, unlike Mrs. B.'s ; and husbands might hear too many hints on large "dress allowances," and the shame felt by wives when costumes a few weeks old degenerate into rags, all of a sudden, too, because a new fashion—untaxed by the State, unluckily—has been advertised in the *Daily Mail* or the *Telegraph*.

Yet the catering system has been tested here and there, not without some promise of future success. And how architects would rejoice if a kitchen were no longer necessary in each flat ! For indeed, to plan good service quarters on a small site is a hard task indeed, almost hopeless, yet it determines two things : the comfort of families and the success of landlordism as a venture in finance. When servants complain that their bed-rooms are stuffy and their kitchens small, and that they hate walking to the far end of flats to answer rings at the front door, we know what happens elsewhere. There's a drama of nerves in the parlour : and it is acted daily in a multitude of little homes.

To understand how and why so many bad flats were built, we must take a rapid glance at the history of this form of industrialism, which had its rise in Victoria Street about thirty years ago, or thereabouts. There had been English flats of a kind before then, of course, not merely in the Inns of Court, as far back as the sixteenth century, but in mediæval castles also, where retainers lived on the lower floor and my lord and his family in the upper storeys. But these were not domestic flats such as the Scotch had in Edinburgh during the early days of the Renaissance. At first, as happens often nowadays, the appeal was made to the well-to-do, and thorough methods were exploited. That is why the Victoria Street flats have still to be reckoned among the best. But they were not received at first with enthusiasm. For a considerable time their chances of success were doubtful, so opposed were they by the conservatism of English families ; and although the opposition was frequently unreasonable, some good arguments were hit upon, and these have not yet lost their value.

It was asked, for example, whether flats were in accord with the national character ? They might be excellent in countries

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that disliked fresh air in rooms and that found no pleasure in exercise. But then, would they help English people to get that freedom which a staircase from storey to storey gives to house-dwellers? You are tired of your library, for example, and the day being wet, you long for a change, so up the stairs you go and find a new atmosphere. It is not till you live in a small flat, with rooms all on a level, cribbed, cabined and confined, that you feel how acutely a home may suffer from congested lungs. Then you begin to understand how friendly a staircase really is in northern home life; what a jolly exercise to all in low spirits; and what a solace to the nerves of women, who escape by it from floor to floor, dropping a worry here and another there, finding comfort in movement, and thankful to get away from that evidence of home discipline that empties a room or two of furniture every morning, and rehearses scene by scene for the great drama of a Spring Cleaning! All the year is a preparation for that event; and when, morning after morning, the passageway in a flat is blocked with furniture from one room or another, what chance of peace can a tired housewife expect to find? There is real danger that, being harassed beyond all patience, she *will speak to the servants*, and everyone knows what that means. Visits to registry offices begin at once, with booking fees, perhaps. You never can tell.

Such problem plays are quite common in little flats, for Englishwomen are not at ease there, whether housewives or servants. The maids have many grievances. There's no gossipy back-door, no yard, no area steps; so that unmarried tradesmen—they must be unmarried, I suppose, or ought to be—have no excuse for lingering talks. What they have to do is to make far-off signals from the basement yard, by blowing into those long tubes that connect the bottom of the "well-hole" with the kitchens on each floor. If you shout words of love into the lower end of a tube, a whistle sounds at the upper end, startling a cook-general. And there's no entertainment in that. How, under such conditions, can a poor maid keep on cosy chatting terms with any tradesman, however handsome he may be? It is all very well to say that neither he nor she has a right to flirt

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in work hours. Rights are cold friends—unless we snatch them for ourselves from the hand of opportunity. Besides, flats for the middle class must not attempt to do over much. Children they forbid, but how is Cupid to be banished from the kitchen ?

Moreover, the criticisms of thirty years ago went a step further than that, and one question asked was particularly to the point. It was this : As a flat can never be a house, why is house-planning taken as a guide ? Why advertise that a single floor “ has all the accommodation of a mansion in town ? ” Not only is that a lie, but flats ought to have a plan of their own, a distinctive plan, for they invite Englishfolk to change their traditional ways of living, and that fact demands a changed system of arrangement. For indeed, houses and flats have to each other the same relation as novels have to short stories ; they are separate and distinct forms of art ; their needs are widely different, and their methods also, accordingly. Every good writer knows that in fiction. Not one would pit a short story against a novel. And yet, in architecture, the first short storeys or flats were planned and advertised as if they were genuine houses.

Before that matter could be explained, a sudden “ boom ” in flats began, no one knew how or why. It seemed to come from nowhere, like a panic among disciplined troops. Here, in England, such crazes appear from time to time and run their course, feverishly. I have, for instance, three or four relics of the bicycle mania—£1 shares in a Company, and to-day a collector of antiquities might give me a farthing for the lot. Flat shares too ? Thank you, no ! They were untempting from the first. My sympathies are on the house-and-home side of architecture, because it is often supported by private persons of excellent taste, while flats are invariably trade speculations, gambles in domestic architecture, financed by those limited liabilities which pine for high interests. Under these conditions it is very difficult for an architect to do his best work. A business company is not as a rule a clever speculator, for conscience may disappear altogether when many minds dictate the compromises of finance. In a choice between rash and wise economies, such as must be made daily in building schemes, a single mind may keep its judgment

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cool and clear, but a company? A board of directors with shareholders to consider? What could be more incalculable than that? A general election, perhaps, or a pretty woman with infinite variations of mind.

Yet there is hope, according to Mr. Sydney Perks. One day, perhaps, several private clients will combine together and build for themselves an ideal block of flats, taking each a suite of rooms. It is a happy ideal. Architects would then have conditions far more favourable to thoroughness and art; but heavens, we have to make the best of existing conditions!

Keeping, then, to our main subject—flats for little incomes—let us see what other drawbacks poke fun at us, not usually in a pleasant manner. The first is the large amount of space thrown away on dim passages and vestibules, which get a flicker of daylight through plate-glass windows over doors. The glass, somehow, is very thick and opaque. From a step ladder you could not spy through it; but as ladders are not used as chairs, they do not threaten the privacy of rooms; and so I don't understand why glass to admit light should be too coarse for that purpose. If ordinary window-panes were chosen, the privacy of rooms would not be disturbed, for flat-dwellers never grow exceptionally tall, like celery under a globe of glass.

Dim passages and dreary vestibules are unforgiveable, particularly in small flats, for when passages are long and 3 ft. 6 in. wide, consider how the rooms have to be whittled away. The common sense of tenants ought to rebel against that bad planning. Are they afraid of communicating doors between rooms? If so, cannot architects hit upon schemes by which the passage could be kept away from the middle of their plans, slashing into halves a small area for a suite of little rooms? Supposing the corridor to be essential to our British ideas of privacy, then it should be made comfortably essential, an Elizabethan Long Gallery on a reduced scale, well lighted and warm, wide enough for window seats, and therefore something more than a mere passage. Moreover, when the area of space forbids a roomy corridor, a system of communicating doors should be thought out carefully, so as to link together those rooms which can be



FLATS AND MANSIONS, CLEVELAND ROW, ST. JAMES'S, LONDON, S.W. MATERIALS: PORTLAND STONE, FRONTS "GREEN SEDAN COUNTERS," THE ROOFING OF SLATES. THE HEIGHTS OF THE HORIZONTAL LINES ARE GOVERNED BY THE MAIN HORIZONTALS OF THE NEIGHBOURING PROPERTY; THE WINDOWS, GROUPED SYMMETRICALLY, ARE ENRICHED WITH IRON BALCONIES

Frank T. Verity, Architect, London

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united without the least offence to any comfort. The service quarters form one group, and the chief day-rooms with the principal bed-room another. In a small flat almost anything is better than a sacrifice of room-space to a feeble little vestibule and a twilight corridor. London flat-owners would be astonished if they reckoned up in square yards the total amount of flooring squandered away on dark passages ; and its yearly value in money would so astound them that they would ask, with common sense, " Why in the world did we stereotype immature plans ? "

The reason is not far to seek. They were afraid of the public, as afraid of it as are the editors of " the people's own magazines," so called. The more democratic we become as a nation, the more confident are trade speculators that thorough good work is hateful to the masses. A distributor of fifth-rate short stories once said to me : " My magazine is a poor affair and I should like to edit a better one ; but—the public ! " And a very similar thought has been expressed by flat-owners. " We'll do better when tenants want us to move forward." In the meantime, however, what about the millions of public money spent year by year on a free and enforced education ? When will Parliament set a Committee of Architects to draw up a series of standard plans for popular houses and flats, tabulating all the many trickeries from which gamblers in building must be warned off by official regulations ?

One regulation, I feel sure, would give to each little flat a comfortable hall, big enough to be a family day-room, and communicating by doors with all other principal rooms. The only passage would be a short one from the entrance to the hall. Still, whatever you do, a small flat is an afflicted home, suffering always from cramp and from shortness of breath. Is it then a better home than landladies try to make for lodgers with slender means ? Perhaps. Lodgings have only one advantage : you can leave them at a week's notice, whereas flats have to be leased. But experience shows that the daily miseries of a life in hired rooms are recruiting agents for little flats. " Oh, we can't stand this any longer," cries the wife, after the landlady's cat for a year or so has eaten its daily meals of meat and vegetables, with tea,

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coffee, and apple tart. "Shall we try a flat?" says the husband proudly, as if unused to brilliant inspirations. "I've seen a good many recently," says the lady's voice; "and some," she goes on, "*are wonderful bargains.*"

That clinches the matter. A flat is taken, and all the old advertised conveniences are stated and restated by the happy pair. Friends are bored, perhaps; but the blessings of a flat are for a time so very real and fascinating that you can't help speaking of them with joy. You say, for example, that little flats are much better than small houses, being not by any means so costly for service and upkeep; and when you need a holiday, you just lock your door, give the key to the porter, and away you go without a worry. Your flat is safe: and safe it ought to be, because your landlord trades upon those very advantages which you detail to your friends. His rents are high because of them.

After a while, too, other facts become gallingly plain to the happiest of happy couples. The rent seemed low for a flat—only £80 a year, let us say, a trifle in flatland finance; but when you add to it coal, gas, electric light, window cleaning, tips to the porter, a season ticket, etc., the quarterly bills make you gasp, and the wee rooms appear smaller and airless. Then you begin to criticise. One thing annoys you particularly; it is a "well-hole" running from the basement yard upward to the sky; and it attempts to give light with fresh air to all the kitchens, and water closets, and minor bed-rooms. The very same expedient was used in several country houses of the sixteenth century, as at Longleat Hall in Wiltshire (1567-1579), where it tried to be as Italian as the English climate would permit. But architects of the Renaissance soon found out that internal wells for light were a cause of many discomforts. In Italy they were big, and gave shade, coolness, shelter from burning sunshine; while in England, unless a house were as huge as a palace, their size could not be other than small; and then, unpurified by sunlight, they collected stale, damp air and sent it through open windows to circulate from room to room. That is why a good many early examples were done away with. The wells were covered over, converted into integral parts of a house.

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Yet our modern builders not only harked back to an arrangement of plan which English architects had condemned a long time ago ; they revived it in a great many " cheap " examples, as if it were too good to be spoiled even by workmanship without thought. Still, nations get what they deserve. Does anything matter when the finest gift of the ages—our inherited home life—is valued less in trade than are cheapness and five per cent. interests ?

How bad things became in that matter of " well-holes " may be judged from a warning which Mr. E. T. Hall published not more than two years ago. " Provision should be made (he wrote) for a current of air through small internal areas or courts extending from the ground to the sky. These small courts, frequently and not inaptly, are called well-holes. Now everyone knows that air at the bottom of a well is often so bad that a candle will not burn there. A well-hole—an area without *through* ventilation—is bad in the same way, though in a lesser degree ; and when, as is generally the case, there are gullies at the bottom, giving off foul gases from fermenting deposits, it will be realized that windows opening into such areas are merely inlets for poison." Well-holes, therefore, " should be ventilated at the bottom by means of an inlet of large capacity from a road or from some good open space where there is always a movement of air going on."

Sound advice, of course, but think of its being necessary ! The builders of England have to be taught the A.B.C. of their business. And the public has to be warned that a shut-up well in house architecture collects foul air. Why is it that the Board of Trade did not think it worth while to take action years and years ago, instead of leaving that duty to Mr. E. T. Hall and other private experts ?

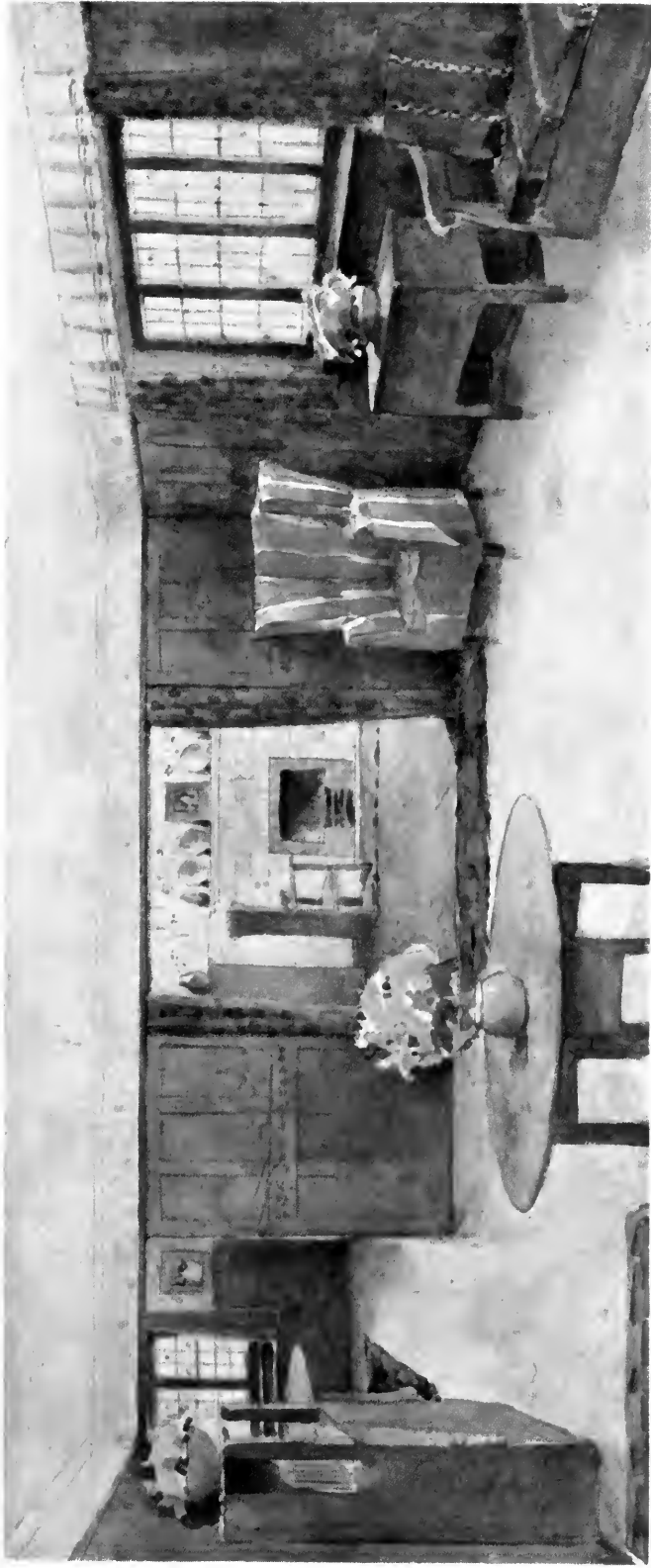
Even with a through and constant draught from an open space outside, well-holes are not always sweet ; indeed, some kinds of wintry London weather make the very best of them unpleasant. One day, perhaps, a furnace will be put under the pavement of internal areas, partly to supply hot-water heat to all the flats, and partly to cause an upward circulation of air by keeping the pavement warm ; but this innovation would need some structural

OUR HOMES

changes. Rain falling on a heated pavement would generate steam ; and so, no doubt, a glass canopy would have to be built over the area, and be constructed in such a way as would keep out rain and snow and yet leave a free passage for the air ascending the well-hole. Or, again, the ventilation could be what it is in coal mines—a fan draught driven forward by steam power.

Another thing of interest is the staircase ; it often collects and holds the dead air from a well-hole : and in many London flats for little incomes, it is made inadequately as a protection against fire. Indeed, landlords show too much respect for British traditions of courage ; as if they believed that no tenant of theirs would give way to panic if a fire broke out, but would wait with maxims of hope on his lips till the fire brigade drove up and rescued him. A single staircase and a lift serve a block of perhaps a dozen flats ; a fire might destroy the lift and turn the staircase into a furnace shaft, filled with flames and smoke ; and thus, at a time of danger and perhaps of panic, tenants would have to be as nimble as acrobats, escaping by the roof or scrambling along a cornice to the windows of the flat next door. I shiver at the thought of it ; for if I attempted a midnight adventure of that kind, dressed in singed pyjamas, I should plop down into the street below, startling any heroic policeman who should try to catch me in his helmet.

In recent flats refuge staircases have been put outside, usually behind and out of sight, for they are ugly things of iron. Why iron should be chosen I do not know. It might become red hot if the fire reached it ; perhaps, too, it might melt little by little ; and a fluid or molten staircase, hot as a blast furnace, appears more inhospitable than a narrow cornice unprotected by guide-ropes. Flats would be none the worse if they received just a little of that coddling attention which municipal authorities lavish on theatres. Anticipations of fire rule over a playhouse. Wherever you look, there you see preparations for a coming disaster, and let us hope that panic will be reasonable, will trip away quietly through the many emergency doors. In America, I am told, a safety staircase in flat architecture has to be put within strong walls, so as to protect it from flames ; and this



INTERIOR OF A FLAT. REPRODUCED FROM AN ORIGINAL DESIGN

SEE THE ARCHITECT'S OWN BOOK (MESSRS. NEWNES LTD.)

M. H. Baillie Scott, Architect, Bedford

FLATS AND FLATS

point is one to be considered by British experts. The point which I wish to lay stress upon is this : that blocks of flats with hundreds of families in them are as public as theatres and as likely to suffer from fires and panics. Yet their staircases are often cramped and their emergency precautions inadequate.

When we turn from flats for little incomes to those which are built for the well-to-do, the speculative builder gives place to the trained architect ; but although much good work has been done, the total results leave a great deal to be desired. That is why Mr. E. T. Hall has complained that London architects have not yet had the opportunities which abound in all large cities on the Continent, where the well-to-do generally live in flats. The French "Appartement" is the town home of France, and the German "Wohnung" is the unit of German house architecture. With us, on the other hand, flats are nothing more than a tentative and wayward fashion or experiment, and I do not for a moment believe that they will enter permanently into the nation's home traditions. It is far more likely that, following the British delight in compromise, they will yield precedence to maisonettes of two storeys each. When you enter a typical French flat, you feel the presence of traditions belonging to a settled and progressive type of architecture ; while in England, however good a flat may be, something essential is missing ; the work is a *tour de force* rather than a work of art. And there is no surprise in that, because the architect was handicapped by conditions foreign to his inherited ideas of what a British home should be. He had unusual problems to solve ; and the unusual in architecture is a language to be learnt, not a mother tongue.

This said, we can turn now to a few general rules and principles.

1. Though the average income grows less, rents rise higher and higher.
2. To be rented and taxed into debility is the least amusing road to ruin.
3. To cheapen excessive prices, we must be unsparing of adverse criticism.
4. Tenants, then, before they take a flat, should make it their business to find as much fault as they can. Any enthusiasm

OUR HOMES

on their side is very foolish, because it helps a landlord to believe that high rents ought never to come down to the level of our incomes. Tenants pay much for little only because they have forgotten the Old English method of bargaining. It says little for their common sense that they buy to this day with patience the national curse of jerry-building, when a habit of defensive criticism would save them from its gathering discomforts and expenses.

5. Most flats are as easy to correct as a child's dictation, so that tenants—mere tyros in the art of fault-finding—are aided by their landlord's errors. Let them make the most of that help.

6. Do not forget to test the kitchen range and the other grates before you sign your lease, and note the name of the manufacturer. Some coal merchants put their names on grates !

7. Mr. E. T. Hall says with truth that many of the flats so hastily built in London are unfitted for any particular class of the community. They appeal at random to some indefinite public, being neither luxurious enough for the rich nor cheap enough for those incomes which cannot afford higher rents than from £70 to £150 a year.

8. There is no advantage in a flat if you need a season ticket. Better by far a country cottage within an hour's run by train from your day's work in town. Flats, then, are for those who wish to live within walking distance from their offices ; and I dwell upon this point for two reasons. First, few persons keep account of the yearly cost of season tickets *plus* occasional 'bus fares and cabs ; and next, the West-Central district has a great many fine old houses which do not let at all readily, and which, without difficulty, could be changed into good flats and maisonettes. At present they are often made into boarding houses, things altogether opposed to family life and its responsibilities. British public opinion is influenced far too much by those who live as boarders, being too selfish or too weak for the national duty of making a home.

9. It is always worth while to examine the flats above shops, because in England they are not as a rule liked, and their rents,

FLATS AND FLATS

accordingly, should be open to a bargain. It is different in France and in Austria, where flats above shops are fashionable, even in noisy main streets.

10. Mr. Hall is an advocate of service staircases, like those in Paris. "In a building with only one principal staircase," says he, "a service staircase is a great protection against fire; and when the floors are extensive I think it should be made compulsory." It ought to be put not only "at a distance from the other staircase," but "next an external wall with windows in it," so that smoke may escape in the event of fire. "In some modern and handsome Parisian buildings there are stately principal staircases which are lighted by glazed partitions from the service staircase, which itself has windows. This is bad. If a fire occurred, and the flames went up one staircase, the other would be rendered useless for escape by the breaking of the glass partitions." Each staircase, no doubt, should be carried up to the roof as a fire exit.

11. Yet a staircase for servants has one drawback: it gives us in a form intensified the old problem of the back door. But, if we imitate foreign ways of living, we cannot expect to get all we wish to have. In some Parisian flats all the servants sleep on the top floor, even when there are many suites of rooms under one roof. British housewives dislike that idea. Yet Parisian servants are often more faithful than our own, and every whit as moral. Further, it is very difficult to find a small flat with a good bed-room for the servant; good in size, that is to say, and in position also.

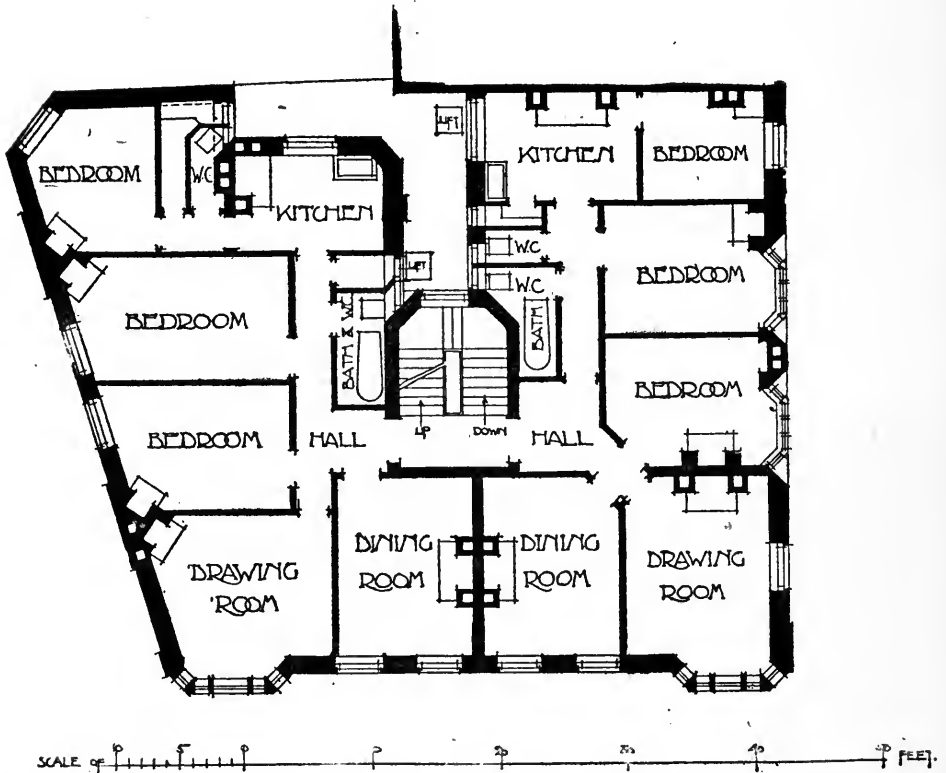
12. A servant's bed-room ought never to be less than a hundred square feet with a height of ten feet. It should never open into the kitchen, though even water closets do that in a good many flats.

13. Bath-rooms should have a large linen cupboard—large enough to contain the hot-water cistern. Then the linen is aired and the rooms are kept warm. Some persons believe that the steam from baths is bad for linen; but that is a mistake, for the steam is a temporary moisture, while the hot-water cistern is permanently warm. Towel-rails heated by hot water are excellent.

OUR HOMES

14. Cupboards in a flat are even more useful than in houses ; and the entrance passages or vestibules should have recesses in the walls for coats, hats, and umbrellas.

15. Finally, in flats for little incomes, somehow, halls and corridors are seldom if ever heated by hot water pipes ; and as the halls are not big enough (as a rule) for a fireplace, it is impossible to make them comfortable in winter.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN: LUXBOROUGH HOUSE, NORTHUMBERLAND STREET AND PADDINGTON STREET, LONDON, W. THE EXTERIOR IS GIVEN ON PAGE 265

Professor Beresford Pite, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



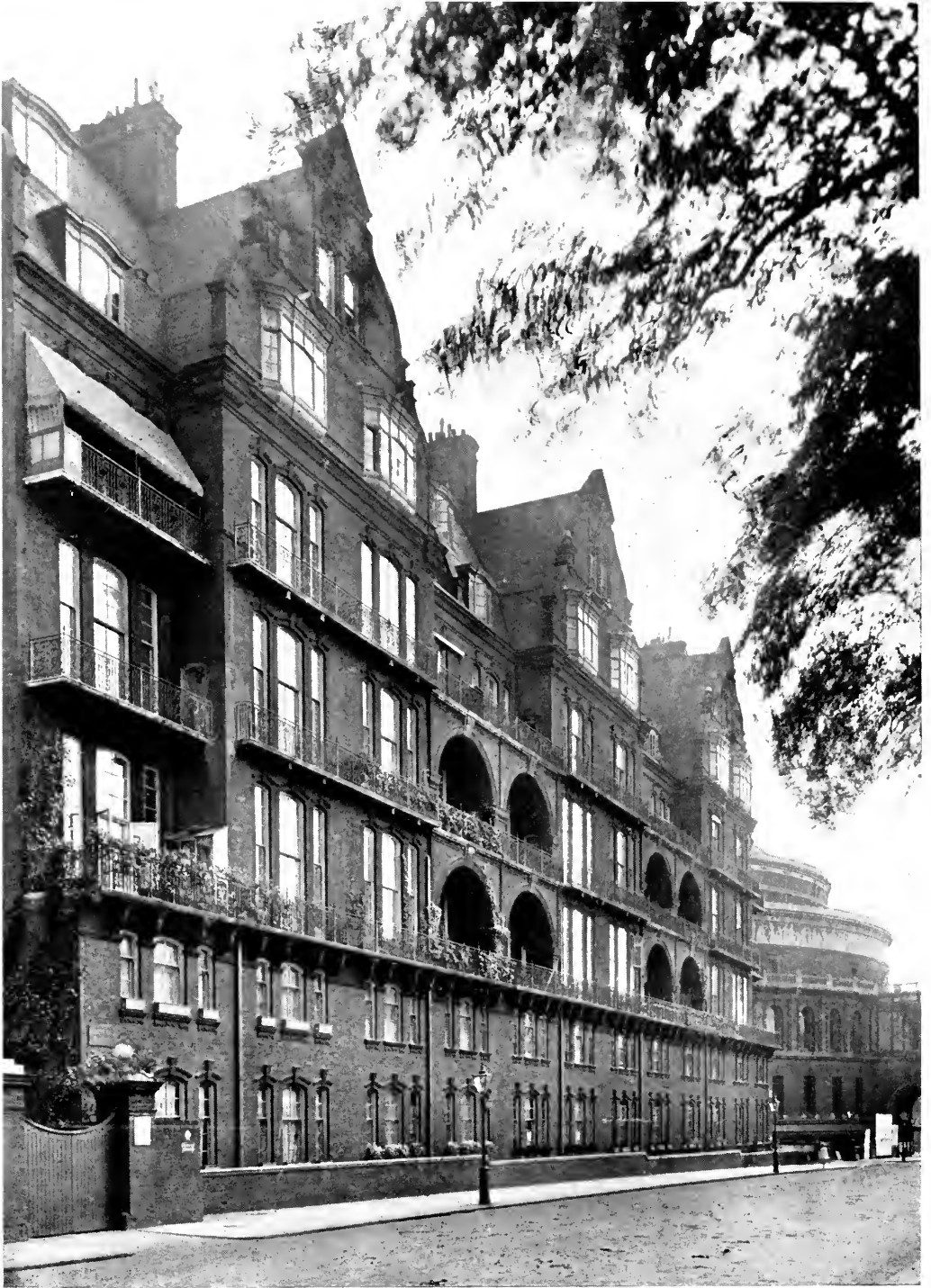
INTERIOR OF A FLAT IN BUDA-PESTH, WITH FURNITURE OF POLISHED MAHOGANY INLAID WITH HOLLY. THE ELECTRIC LIGHTS ARE OF HAMMERED COPPER AND IRON. THE WORKMANSHIP WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE GUILD OF HANDICRAFT, CAMDEN, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

C. R. Ashbee, M.A., Architect, London



LUXBOROUGH HOUSE, NORTHUMBERLAND STREET AND PADDINGTON STREET, LONDON, W. THIS BLOCK OF FLATS SHOWS THAT EXCELLENT DESIGN AND SOUND WORKMANSHIP CAN BE COMBINED WITH THE STRICTEST ECONOMY IN MATTERS OF EXPENSE

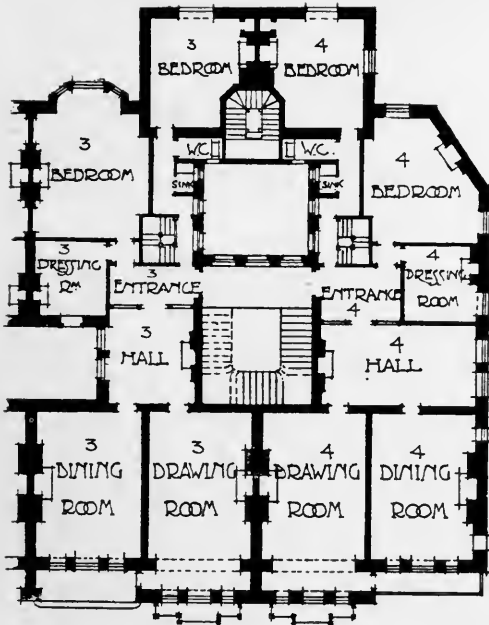
Professor Beresford Pite, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



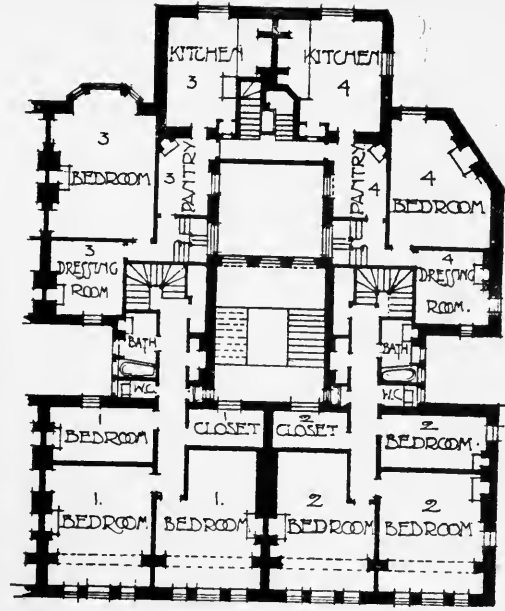
THE ALBERT HALL MANSIONS, LONDON; AN EXAMPLE OF EXTERIOR DESIGN. THE PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN FROM THE MAIN ROAD, LOOKING TOWARDS THE ALBERT HALL

R. Norman Shaw, R.A., Architect, London

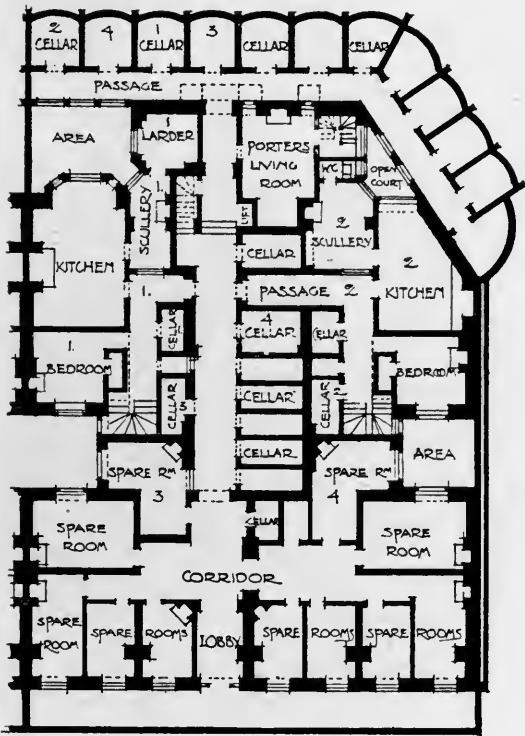
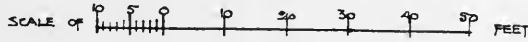
MAISONNETTE FLATS



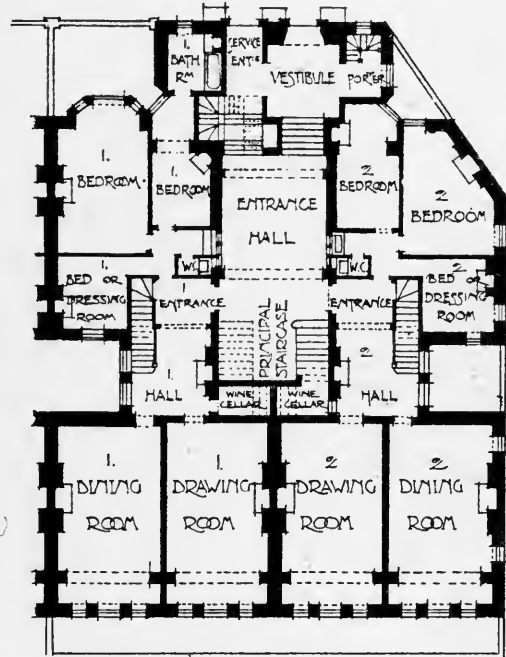
· FIRST FLOOR PLAN ·



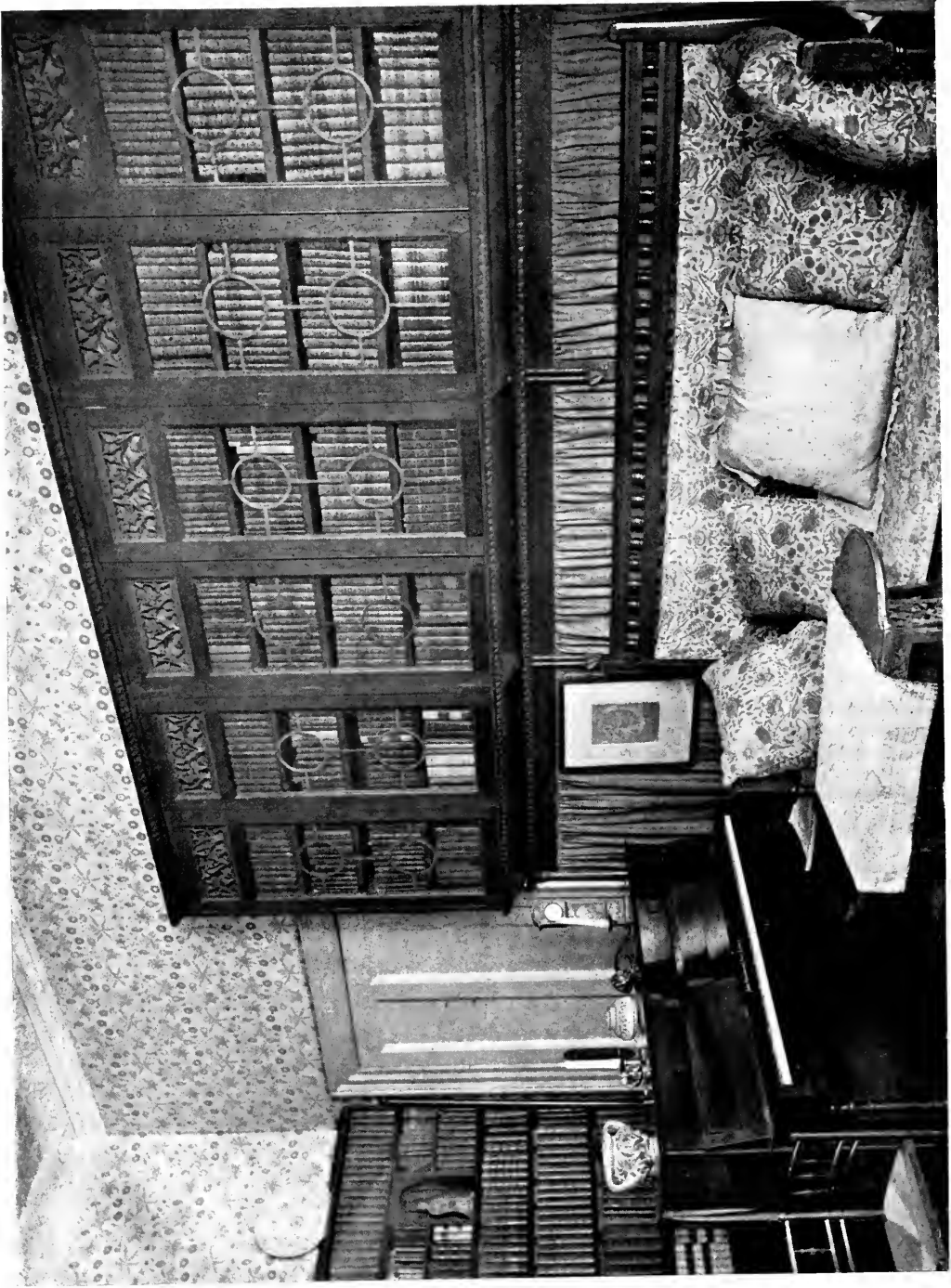
· MEZZANINE PLAN ·



· BASEMENT PLAN ·

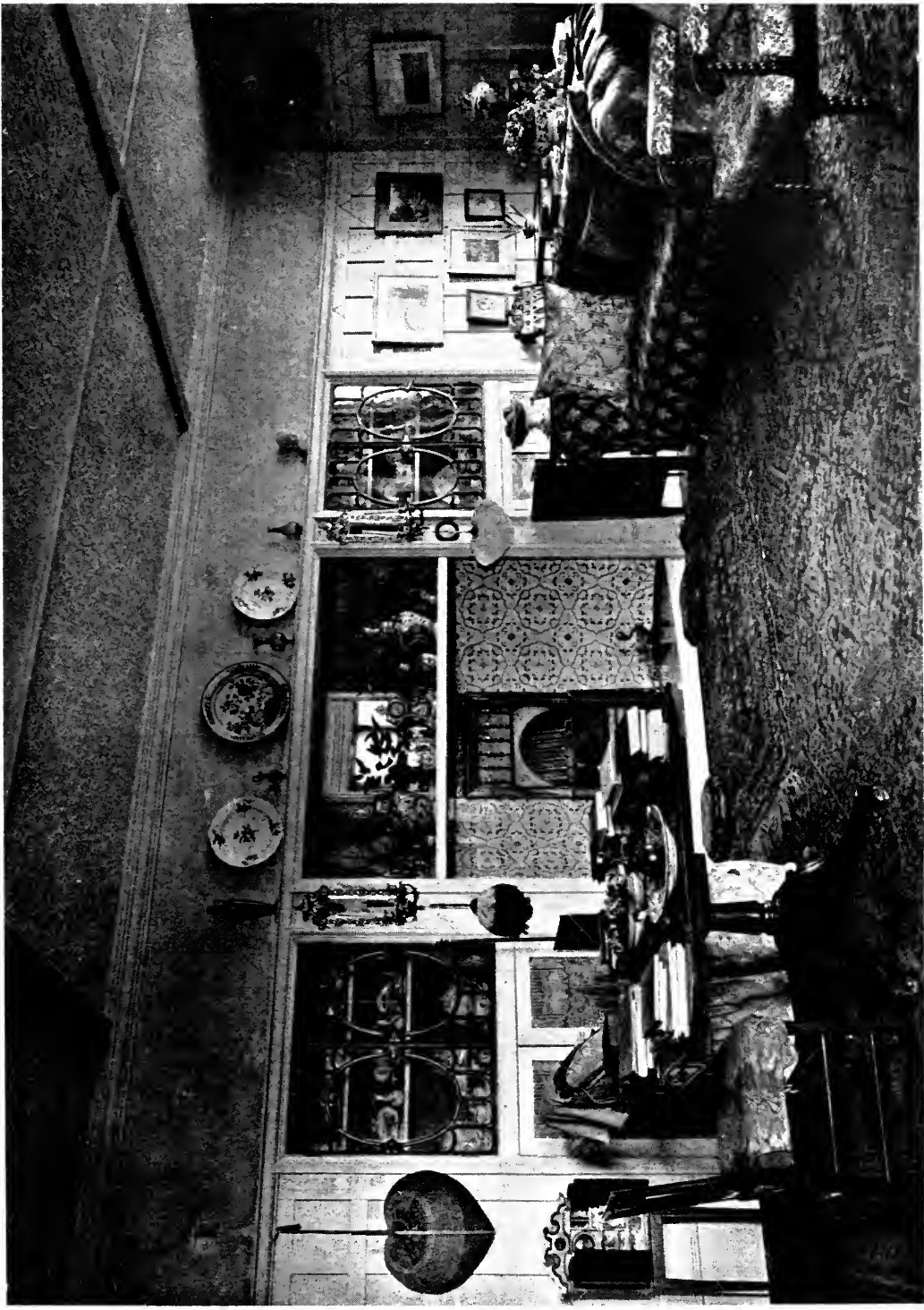


· GROUND FLOOR PLAN ·



SUGGESTION FOR THE TREATMENT OF THE LIBRARY IN A FLAT. IT IS A NARROW ROOM, AND A FEELING OF BREADTH IS GIVEN BY THE TALL BOOKCASE NEAR THE DOOR AND THE HANGING BOOKCASE OVER THE LONG COUCH. THE FURNITURE CAN BE MADE OF SOME INEXPENSIVE WOOD STAINED OR PAINTED A DEEP DULL GREEN, DARK GREENS BEING BETTER THAN PALER SHADES OF THE SAME COLOUR

W. A. S. Benson, M.A., Architect, London

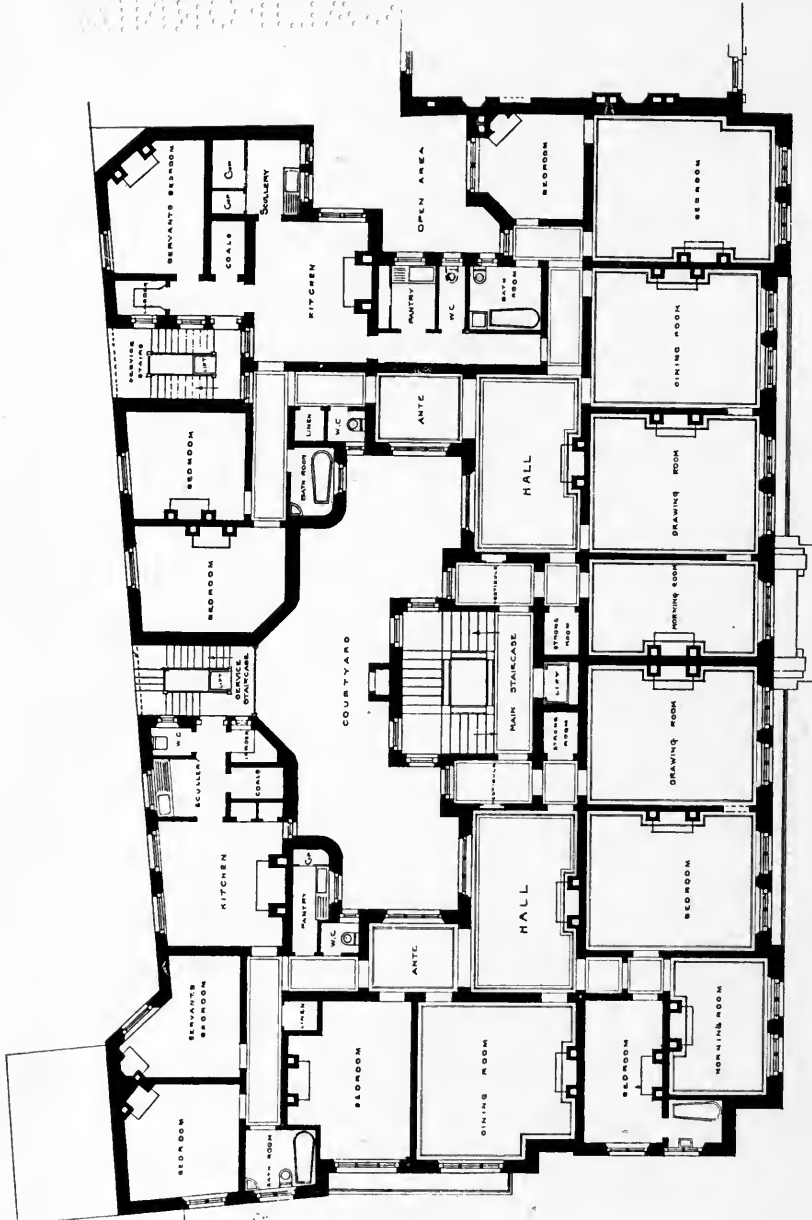


SUGGESTION FOR THE TREATMENT OF DRAWING-ROOMS IN FLATS, WHEN ROOMS ARE NOT LARGE IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE AS LITTLE PROJECTING FURNITURE AS POSSIBLE; AND THIS ILLUSTRATION SHOWS HOW AIR SPACE MAY BE SAVED BY PLACING CABINET-CUPBOARDS IN THE THICKNESS OF WALLS

W. A. S. Benson, M.A., Architect, London

CHAPEL
OF THE
ASCENSION. →

FORECOURT →



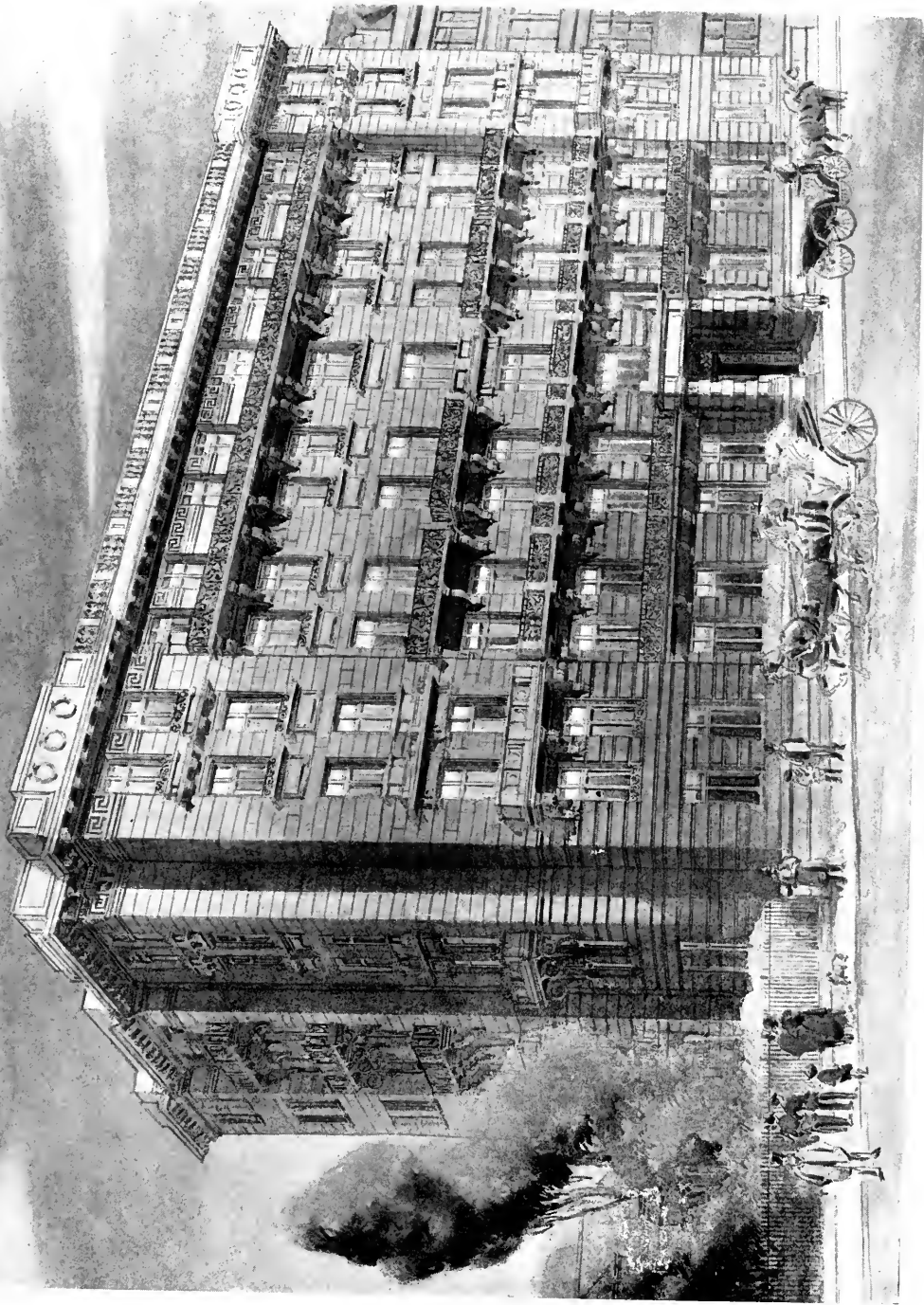
FRANK T. VERITY, ARCHT.
73 BUCKINGHAM STREET, W.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



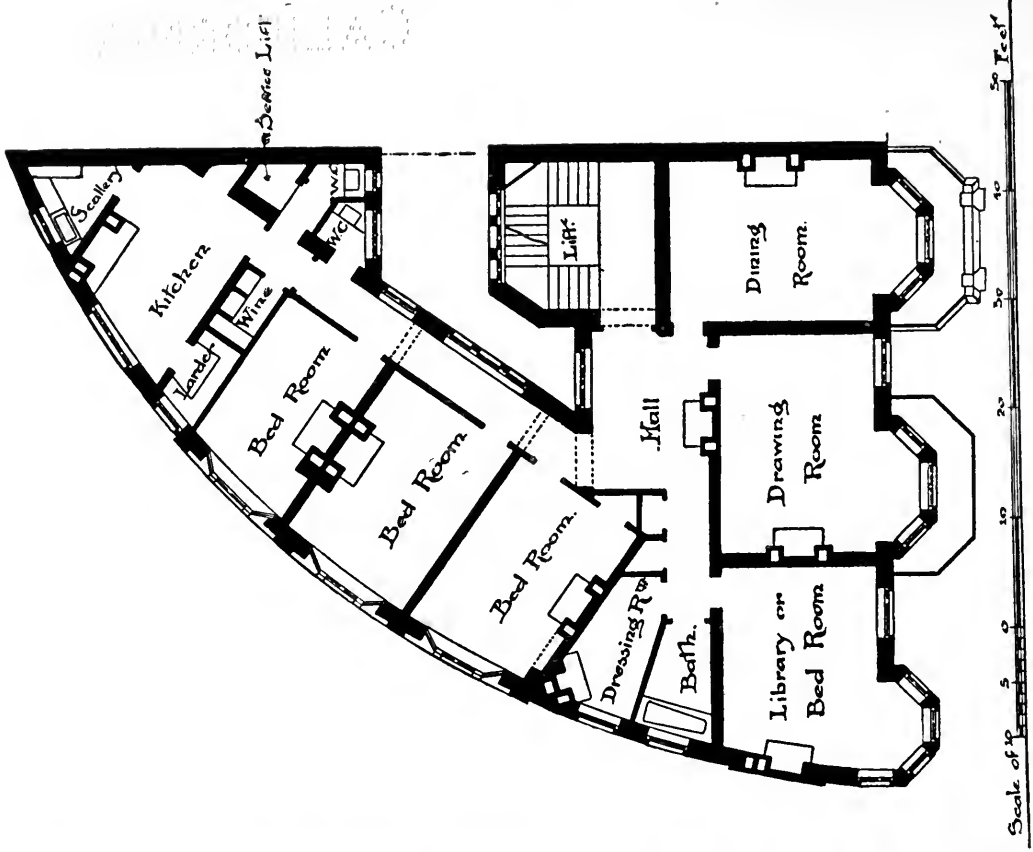
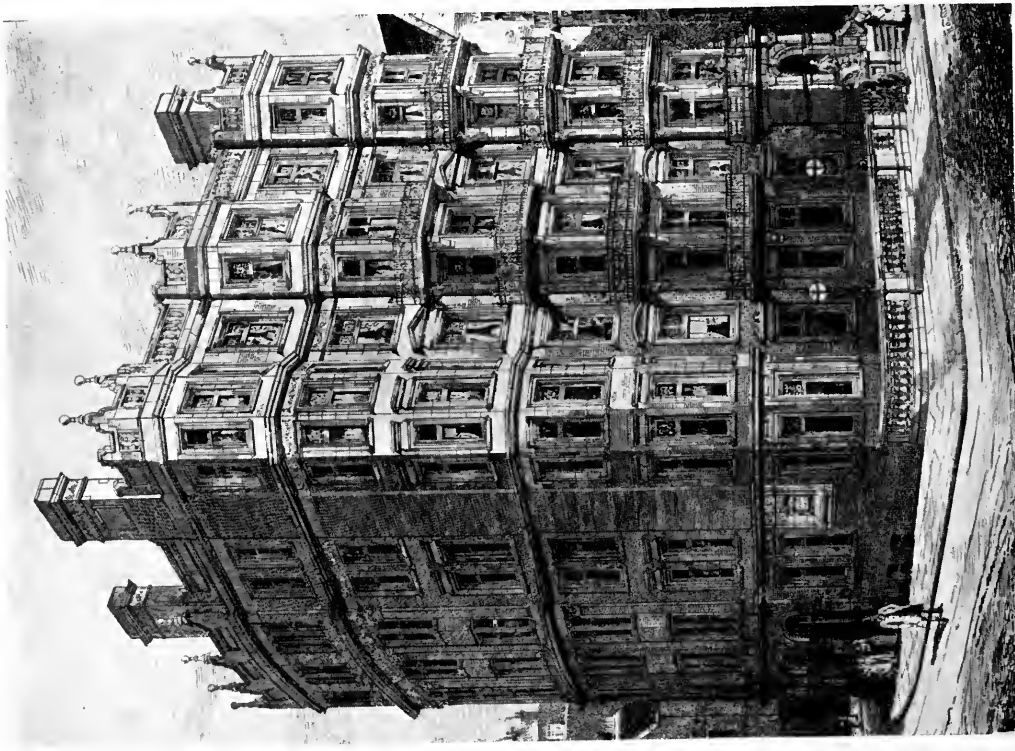
12, HYDE PARK PLACE, LONDON, W. A BLOCK OF MANSION FLATS WITH SPACIOUS ROOMS ADMIRABLY LIGHTED, THOSE IN FRONT FACE THE BAYSWATER ROAD; THE BACK ROOMS OVERLOOK A GARDEN. SEE THE ELEVATION ON PAGE 271. THE PLANNING IS AXIAL AND SYMMETRICAL. NOTE, ALSO, THE ABSENCE OF CORRIDORS

Frank T. Verity, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



12, HYDE PARK PLACE, LONDON, W. A BLOCK OF MANSION FLATS, BUILT OF HAM HILL STONE, WITH A ROOF OF ASPHALT. IN THIS BUILDING THE RENT OF A SUITE OF ROOMS IS £700 PER ANNUM, INCLUDING RATES AND TAXES

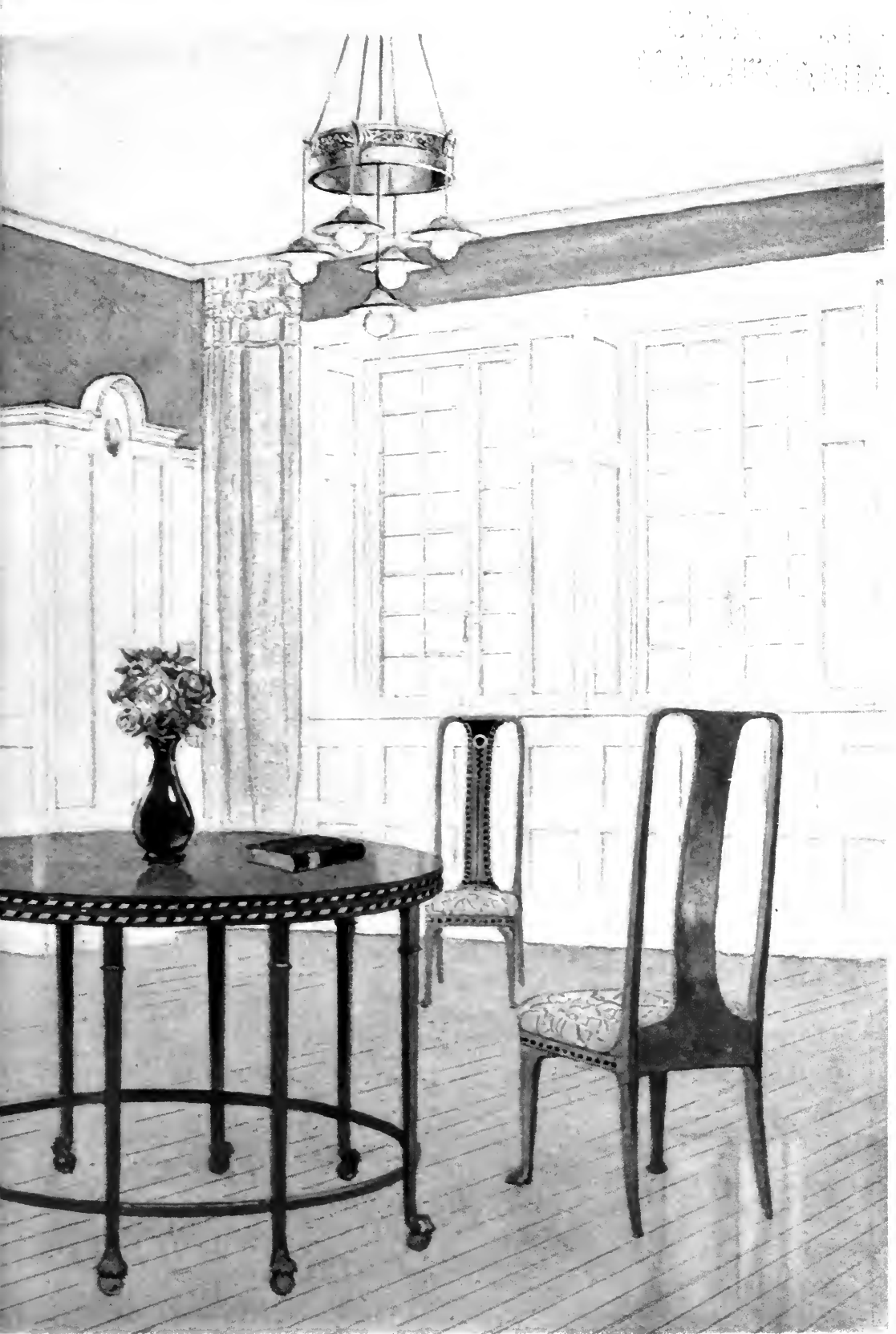
Frank T. Verity, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



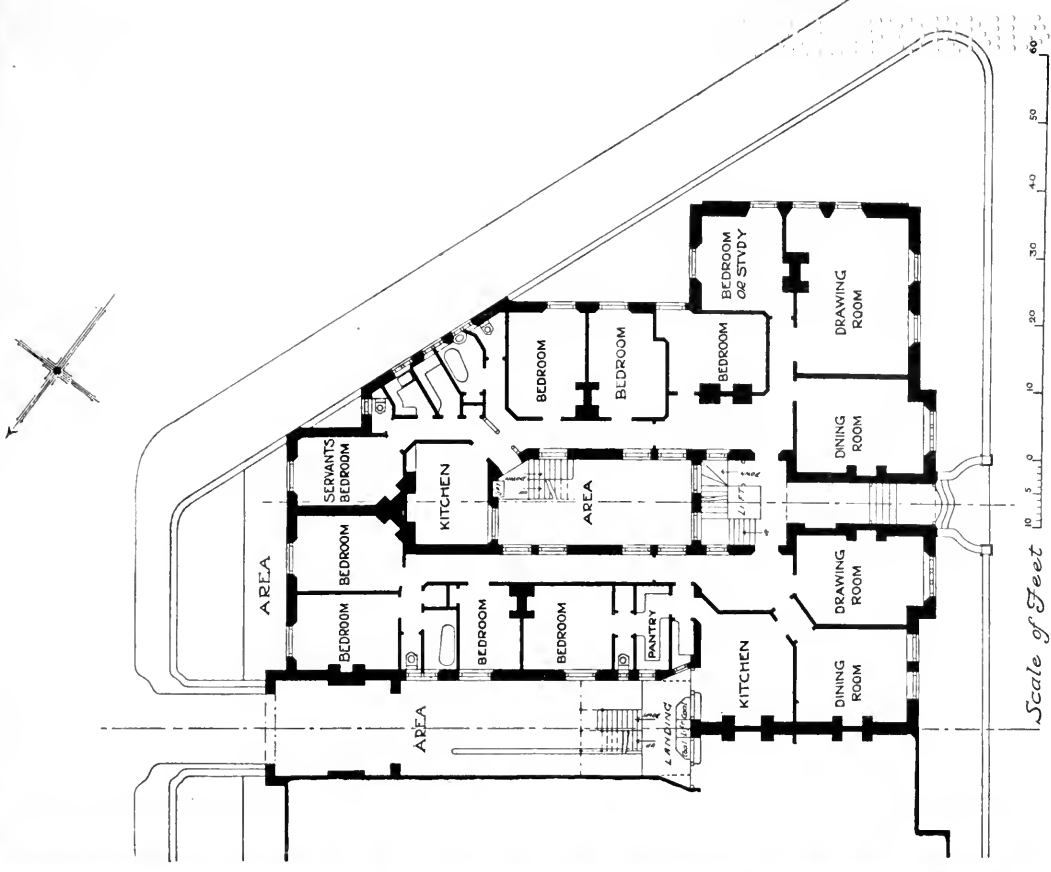
THE MANSIONS, SLOANE GARDENS, LONDON. THE PLAN ILLUSTRATES, IN A CLEVER DESIGN, THE TREATMENT OF A DIFFICULT SITE THAT FORMS A QUADRANT AT THE CORNER OF SLOANE GARDENS. ON EACH FLOOR THERE IS ONE SUITE OF ROOMS

Edwin T. Hall, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



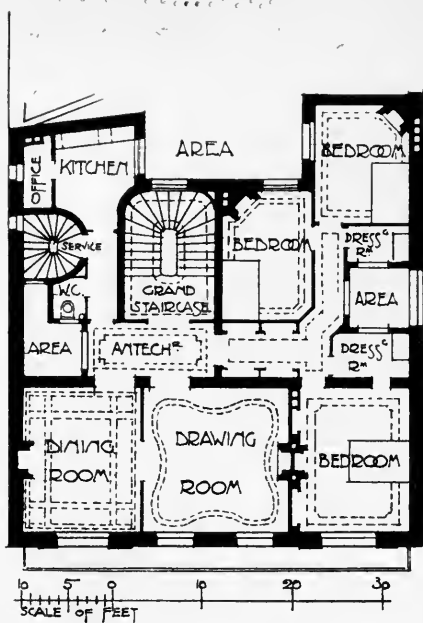


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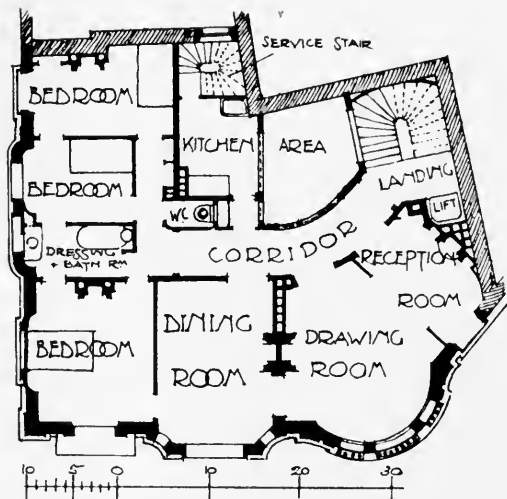
LANOVER HOUSE, ST. JOHN'S WOOD, LONDON. THESE FLATS ARE BUILT OF RED BRICK AND PORTLAND STONE, WITH A ROOF OF GREY-GREEN SLATES. THE DRAWING WAS CARRIED OUT BY T. E. JAGO. THE PLAN REPRESENTS TWO SUITES OF ROOMS, WITH THE CORRIDOR OF EACH FLAT, LIGHTED FROM AN AREA. THE KITCHENS ARE WELL PLACED IN THEIR RELATION TO THE BEDROOMS AND OFFICES OF THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS. THE RENTS, INCLUDING RATES AND TAXES, RANGE FROM £188 TO £240 PER ANNUM

E. P. Warren, F.R.I.B.A., Architect, London



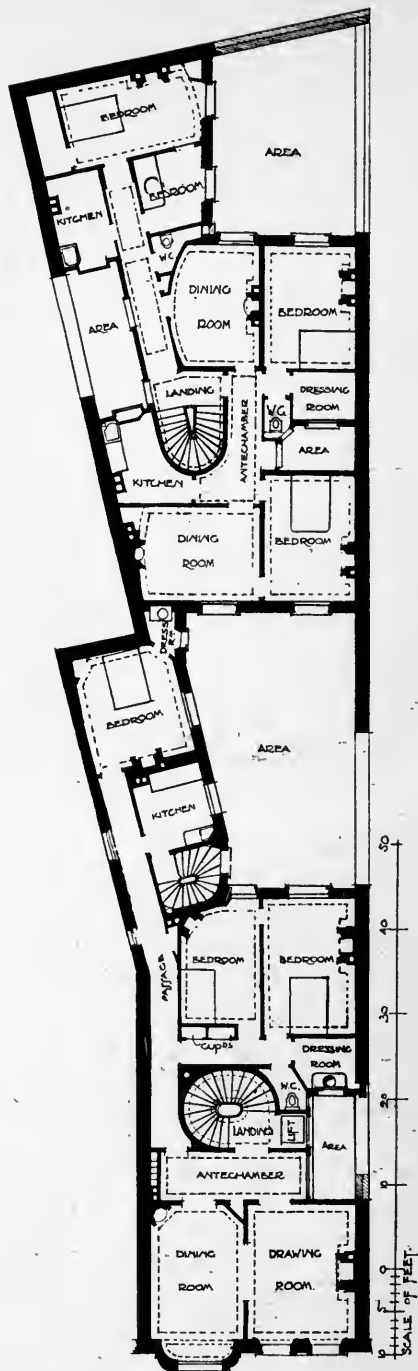
PARIS FLAT, RUE SÉDILLOT, NO. 5

M. Fagot, Architect



PARIS FLAT, RUE DU FAUBOURG SAINT-HONORÉ, NO. 152, AT THE CORNER OF THE RUE DE LA BÔTIE AND THE PASSAGE ST. PHILIPPE-DU-ROULE

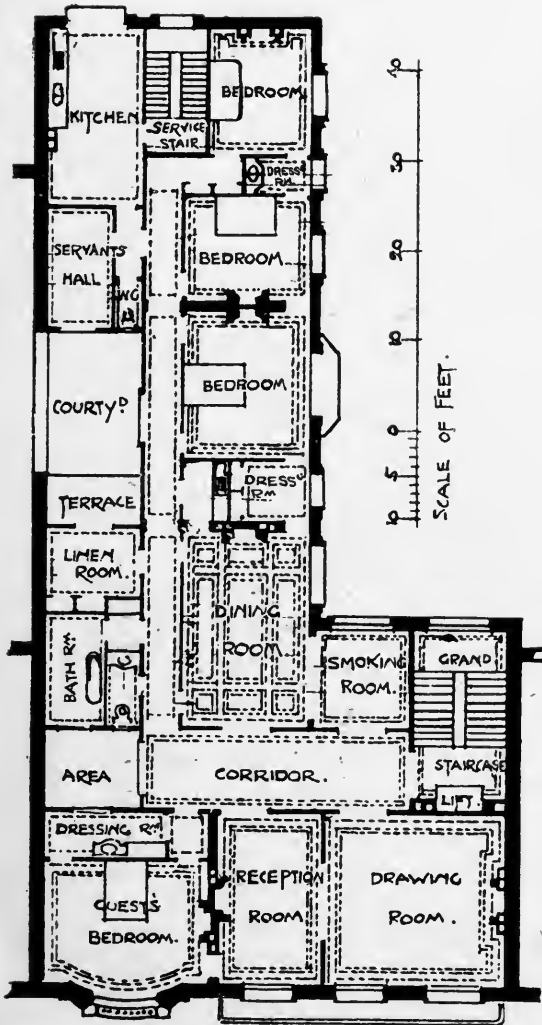
L. Carrier, Architect



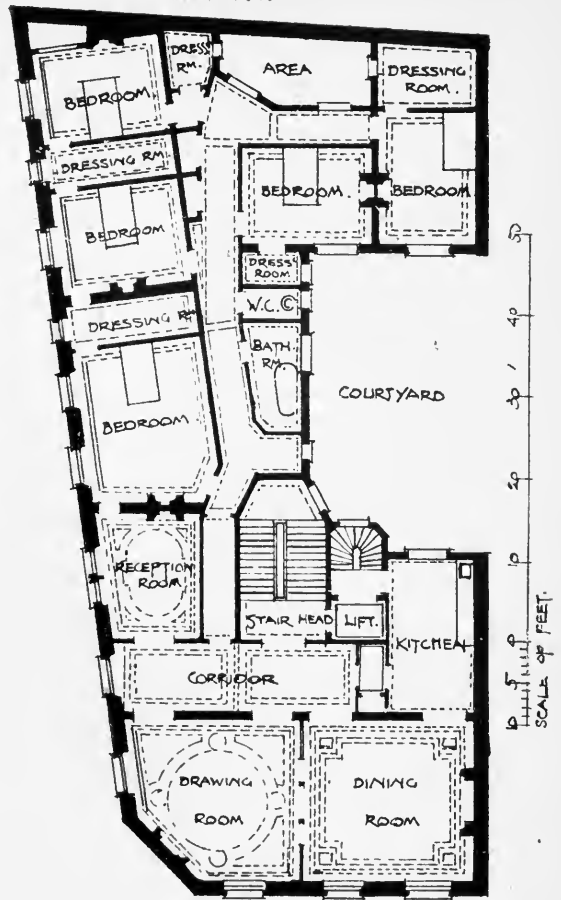
PARIS FLATS, RUE CAUMARTIN, NO. 68, SHOWING THE TREATMENT OF A LONG AND NARROW SITE

Emile Garot, Architect

FLATS



PARIS FLAT, AVENUE VICTOR HUGO, NO. 167



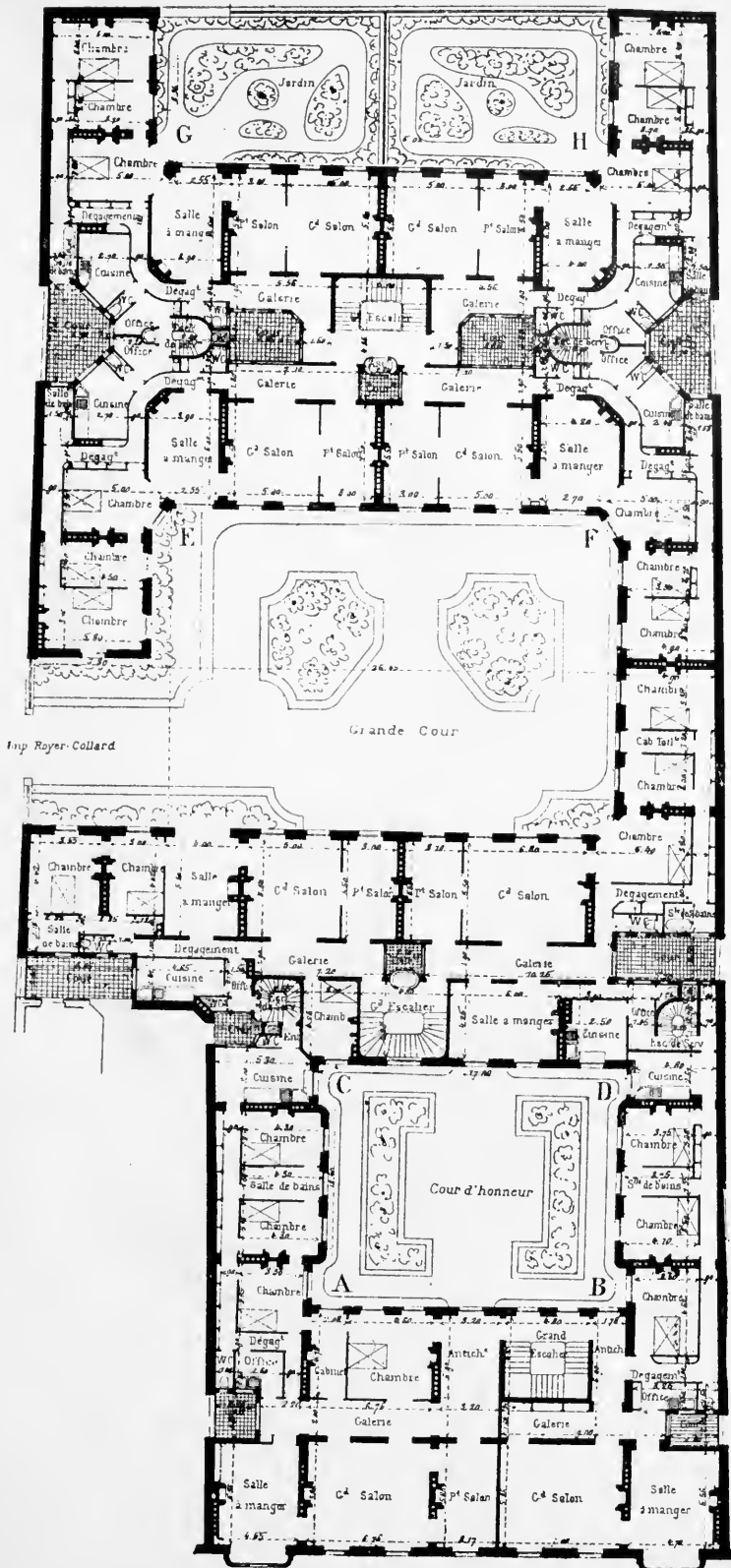
PARIS FLAT, BOULEVARD MALESHERBES, NO. 162



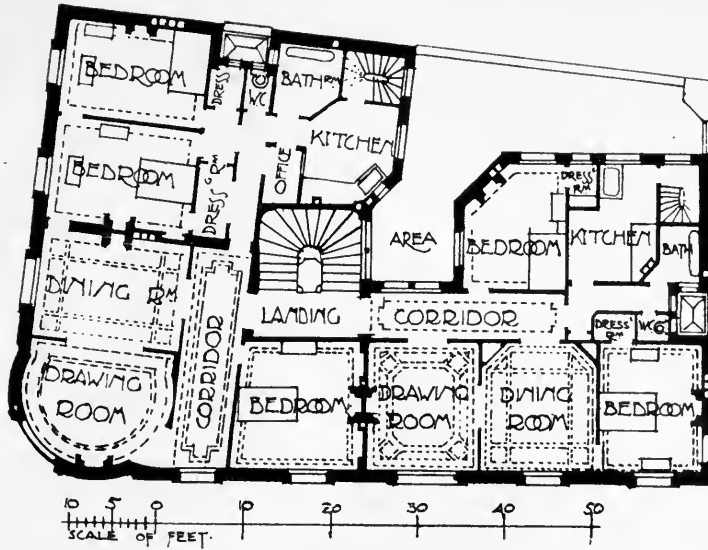
BLOCK OF FLATS, ST. GEORGE'S TERRACE, GLOUCESTER ROAD, LONDON, SHOWING THE ELEVATION WITH
Paul Hoffman



THE RETURN FRONTAGE TO ST. GEORGE'S PLACE, AND THE ROOF GARDENS ON THE FIRST FLOOR LEVEL.
Architect, London

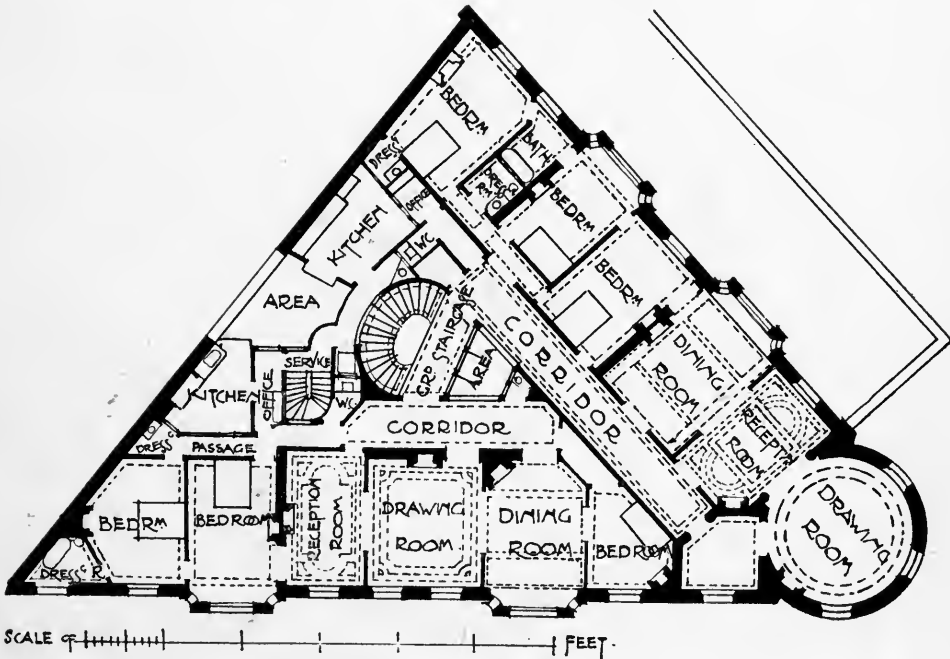


Exp. Royer-Collard



RUE DE VAUGIRARD, AT THE CORNER OF THE RUE REGNIER

M. Delangle, Architect



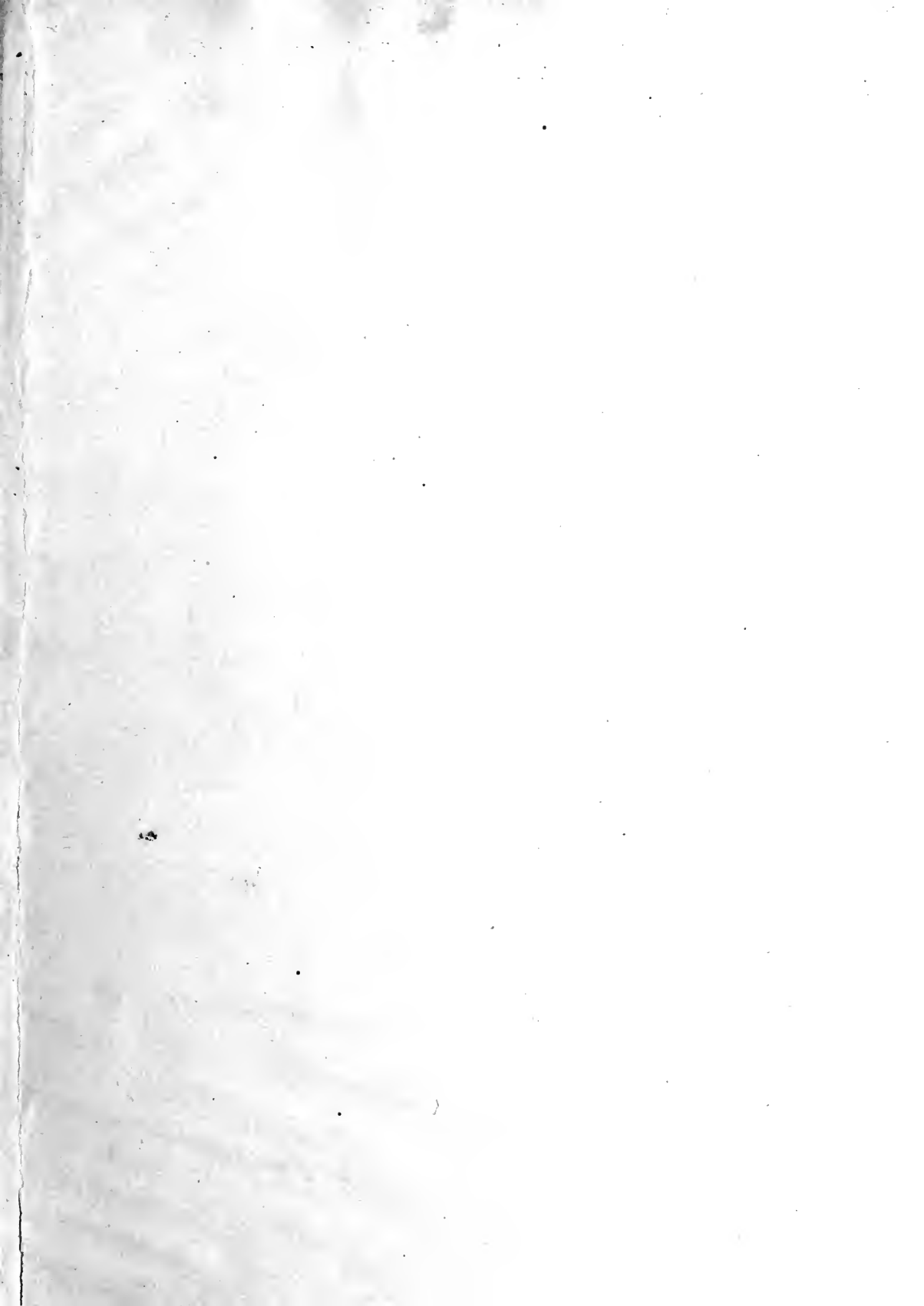
PARIS FLATS, CHAUSSEE DE LA MUETTE, NO. 11, AT THE CORNER OF THE RUE MOZART

M. Thion, Architect



NO. 6, EATON MANSIONS, FATON SQUARE, LONDON. VIEW OF A SITTING-ROOM. AN EXAMPLE OF PLASTER DECORATION ENRICHED WITH SILK PANELS. THE FURNITURE IS OF SATINWOOD. THE RENTS OF THE FAMILY SUITES, INCLUDING RATES AND TAXES, RANGE FROM £380 TO £550 PER ANNUM; AND OF THE BACHELOR SUITES, FROM £110 TO £150 PER ANNUM.

Herbert Read, F.R.I.B.A., and Robert F. MacDonald, F.R.I.B.A., Architects, London



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