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DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE IN AUSTRALIA.

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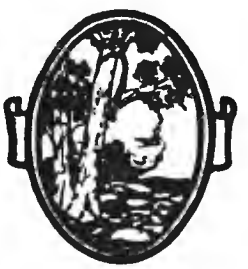
PLATE I.
Architect: Francis Greenway.
Pencil Drawing by W. Hardy Wilson.

The Burdekin House, Macquarie Street, Sydney.
Residence of Alexander Hay, Esq.
Built 1817.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE IN AUSTRALIA



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EDITED BY SYDNEY URE SMITH AND BERTRAM STEVENS
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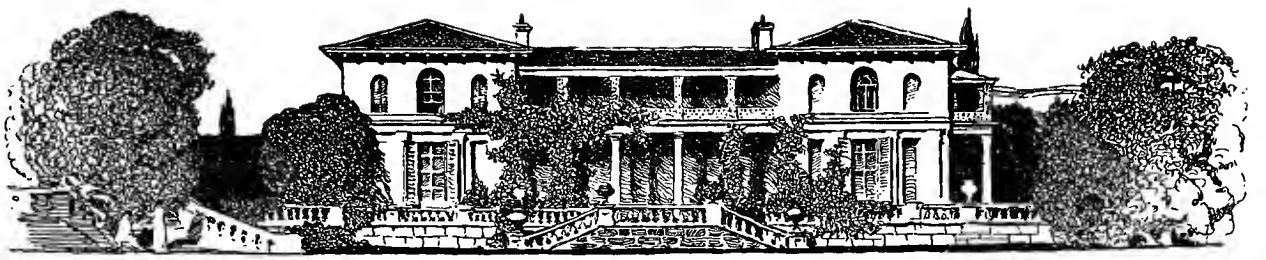

ILLUSTRATIONS

SYDNEY, N.S.W.

ILLUSTRATIONS

MELBOURNE, VIC.

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BRISBANE, Q.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN we entered upon the publication of this book, our desire was to set forth in the finest form possible what good work had been done in one branch of the art of architecture in this country.

We secured the co-operation of Mr. W. Hardy Wilson of Sydney, who is generally acknowledged to be an authority on the subject, and he has supervised the selection of houses and the choice of photographs generally. We were also able to obtain the valuable help of Mr. W. H. Bagot, A.R.I.B.A., F.S.A.I.A., of Adelaide, who made the selection for South Australia, and Mr. E. A. Brooks, of Brisbane, who acted in the same way for Queensland. Mr. R. S. Dods and Professor Leslie Wilkinson, of Sydney, Mr. H. Desbrowe-Annear, of Melbourne, and Mr. Bagot have contributed articles which are of great value in stating the fundamental principles of domestic architecture in relation to the special conditions of Australia.

The services of the best photographers available were enlisted, and these gentlemen spared no pains in endeavouring to get the most beautiful photographs possible of the subjects chosen for them. It was considered that the photographs must in the first place make attractive illustrations, and it happened in many cases that satisfactory prints could not be obtained of the selected houses and interiors. A few fine houses in Sydney were set high on headlands where good camera-work was impossible. Others showed so much dark brick and dark woodwork that the photographic results made dull pictures. We think that the illustrations used will be regarded as amongst the best specimens of the photographic art that have appeared in Australia. For these we are indebted to Messrs. H. Cazneaux and J. Paton, of Sydney, J. Kauffmann, of Melbourne, A. Wilkinson, of Adelaide, and J. Peat Millar, of Brisbane.

The residences chosen for illustration include specimens of various periods and styles of architecture. "Burdekin House" is the earliest, and is the work of Francis Greenway, that most accomplished architect for Governor Lachlan Macquarie, who reigned in New South Wales from 1810 to 1821. "Rockwall" (1835) is a specimen of the Neo-Greek style; "Greenoaks Cottage," an example of the Gothic Revival; the verandah of "Terhyn Worthle," Killara, is in the Californian Mission style; the Presbytery, Hindmarsh, belongs to the Italian school. Amongst the other houses are representatives of a number of other distinct styles of architecture.

Limitation of space has prevented the inclusion of many suitable houses in the States of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and, particularly, Queensland. Tasmania, which possesses some fine old houses, and West Australia had to be omitted altogether. We hope that if this book meets with the approval of the public, we shall be able to continue the work begun in it and publish further examples of sound domestic architecture in Australia.

We have to thank the owners and occupants of the various houses represented for their courtesy in affording facilities to our photographers and supplying information, also Mr. Chas. H. Bertie, of the Sydney Municipal Library, for the trouble he took in getting certain particulars of some of the early residences in Sydney. Careful search has failed to reveal the names of the architects and the dates of erection of a few old houses.

THE EDITORS.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

TO many, architecture suggests primarily house building. However slight the public interest in architecture in general, it is certain that domestic architecture is a theme on which most people have convictions.

No one will deny that environment means a lot and especially the home environment. Architecture is a prime factor in creating environment and however good a country's schools, religious, public and commercial buildings may be, unless the domestic work is of the best, then that country is the poorer. It is in the homes that early impressions are received and to home building that the greater part of a vigorous community's building effort is devoted.

From a brief study of domestic architecture in Australia it is evident that the trend of development has followed closely that of English work. Every phase is represented, from the sound and satisfying work of the early nineteenth century through the essays in mediævalism to country house picturesqueness and Georgian quietness. All are there, the good and the bad. In addition there has latterly been added a manner of home building showing influences from both sides of the Pacific.

Although it is generally granted that most English domestic work reaches a high standard, the climatic and other conditions here are such that considerable modifications must be made in adapting it to these new circumstances.

And is it certain that it is wise to attempt to follow Northern methods of building under conditions so dissimilar? Geography suggests that the shores of the Mediterranean may be richer in suggestion, or the Californian coast manner so largely derived therefrom.

Before going further, let us try to find out what it is in the best modern domestic work that attracts us. It is, of course, the quality that is common to all good architecture of whatever age. Convenience in planning and arrangement, honest, sound construction and the beauty of simplicity in mass and in detail. Simple, firm lines and spaces acting as foil to the garden and broader landscape without; and within, restrained decoration and well chosen furniture. But a house is not an end in itself; our houses and gardens should not seem complete in themselves but should modestly invite the human complement—mine host, his family and friends. The charm of this good modern work is very largely due to the increasing attention paid to traditional work and the craftsmen's methods of the past. The "orig-

inals," the "one-man-deepers" may tickle our fancy for a day or a year, but the stimulus evaporates and we turn to the steady product of ages of development and find therein a lasting satisfaction. The popular striving after originality, a national style, etc., is vain. The community will get the architecture it deserves; the architect, however, can help it to be well deserving.

Let us jot down some of the local factors affecting the problem—climate, topography (especially around the great harbours), system of land tenure, materials.

Australia is a sunny land, the climate hot, encouraging out-door life by day and night; so that the house required is rather a shelter from heat, wind and dust than from cold, rain and snow. This suggests spacious rooms, somewhat lofty with thick walls, not over windowed—the windows probably double hung sashes, ample verandahs with shelter from "Southerlies," "Westerlies," and "North Easters," and a sound system of protection from insects hungry to attack the structure and its inmates.

Other points to be borne in mind are—reduction to a minimum of labour in service, cleaning and cooking and economy in maintenance. And what of fires ? A real fireplace, though threatened by various soulless substitutes, or even with abolition, is by no means ruled out by climatic considerations and, besides, who ever heard of a home without a chimney !

The second factor—site, aspect and prospect, often complicated matters and having conflicting claims, especially on a rocky harbour shore—though at first sight presenting hampering difficulties, will often suggest fresh treatments full of charm.

The third point—land system—is not without effect. That a man should live in his own house on his own land is good where sites are reasonably large; but with small sites and a large number of small houses, each generally striving to express its own individuality, the result as a whole is generally restless, to say the least of it.

It is evident that the prevalence of freehold and individual ownership system has militated against the erection of grouped houses. Where are the quiet tree-planted residential squares and circuses within easy reach of main traffic lines, but sufficiently removed from their noise and dust? Such groups, with colonnaded or arcaded loggias, might surely help to solve the problem of city housing.

Then materials. There are too many materials available nowadays,

the new and the old; the new too often as unsympathetic as they are technically efficient! What is it that most distinguishes old work from modern ? Surely the restfulness of the former, and this is due very largely to the restraint shown in the variety of materials employed. The old manor house, its structure entirely of stone and oak, and, as far as the interior is concerned, one material—stone, stone walls, stone roof and chimney stacks, with a little modest lead and iron to the glazing, weathering beautifully with no periodical repainting to interrupt the process. Or brick, beautiful brickwork not afraid of being used in big uninterrupted masses of texture, with roofs of tiling free from "hardness." Or rough cast, whitewashed cob, thatch or slate. Half timber in its place and used honestly; but one at a time.

Compare this with a great deal of the modern product. How often do we see five or six different materials used on the same elevation ? Stone and brick, rough cast, shingles, weatherboard, slates and tiles. All good and useful materials, but apt to have a disturbing effect when associated in the same building.

One of the many good points about Town Planning Legislation and Residential Estate regulations is that power is given to control the materials used for exteriors. Once these materials have been wisely chosen, with due regard to avoidance of a deadly monotony, the result of such control cannot fail to secure that effect of reasonableness and repose which is so necessary and yet unusual in a closely built district. Something might be done to modify the results of the chaotic use of materials and that restless manner of design by the judicious application of whitewash or distemper, the removal of superfluous features, the co-ordination of the fenestration and the addition of shutters on occasion. These, and some restraint of the painter's palette, might go far to rescue a little order.

There are still many unfortunate features which, though we hope they are the product of a bygone age, are very present with us. Discussion would be painful, but a black list may possibly discourage their perpetuation. The worried ceilings; the leaded lights; the windows with some of the sash bars missing or only enough for the upper sashes; the unforgivable combination of sash bars and leaded lights; the pane-proportions at sixes and sevens; the coloured glass here and there; the tortured arrises and stops to internal plastering; the verandah fringes of cast iron lace; the golden mouldings on the dark door; the ground glass pictures and the mantels; the New Art-Egypto

bracket and shelf style of interior woodwork; the wonderful doors; and—Bolshevistics generally. And why are those convex verandah roofs painted striped in two or more colours ?

And what of the paper friezes with that Romantic Castle or Elizabethan flagship sailing along or crowning its rugged peak at regular four foot intervals round and round the room ? And those unanticipated water tanks, batteries of young silos, naked and unashamed? The gates and boundary fences also seldom help as they might.

Now it may be felt that this kind of criticism is unfair to the architectural profession to-day, but the public must realise that architects have nothing to do with the production of the great bulk of housing work. The profession has produced and is producing a great deal of thoroughly good work for appreciative clients, and in whatever direction we go we may count on coming across individual homes delightful in every way. But quite a lot of swallows don't make a summer, and it is the general mass of ordinary residential work that must be improved. A country's domestic architecture will be judged on the general output and not by the bright examples at present in the struggling minority.

Turning to the all important question of Planning, it is evident that changing local conditions demand special types. The increasing popularity of the single storey house, in urban areas as well as in the country, presents an interesting problem. The large roofs often resulting, while valuable for water catchment, are apt to attract a maximum of heat and to hamper good composition. In addition, the prevalence of low houses robs a locality of a good deal of welcome shade, and unless the sites are of generous dimensions an unduly crowded effect is likely to result.

Broadly speaking, houses may be grouped under three heads: country houses, town houses and, midway between them, that modern and difficult creation—the suburban home. Shall hotels and blocks of flats be considered as domestic architecture ? I think not, although one can picture a group of residences of the flat type but with gardens and very ample verandahs in which it might be possible to create a home. Adjacent, there might be some larger rooms for dining, for service and recreation, common to the tenants—a kind of home club.

Town houses proper have probably been killed by the motor car and the rise in city land values. Built in terraces presenting a facade only to the street and generally simply planned, they attracted, whether treated individually or grouped in larger compositions.

With the country house on ample ground and visible from many points of view, there is no front or back in the ordinary sense but a free-standing mass, composing well from every point of view. Planning will be less restricted; ideal disposition more easy of attainment. Whether formality or picturesqueness be arrived at will depend very largely on the setting. The noticeable tendency towards a more formal manner based on Italian and "Colonial" work points to a healthy reaction against the super-picturesqueness once so popular.

The wise home-builder will see that the house is not overdone at the expense of the garden. In a house set in a beautiful garden, simplicity can hardly be carried too far. A well placed feature or two, tastefully designed and of perfect craftsmanship, may be all sufficient, and in place of overloading the building with unnecessary ornament, a few garden furnishings, a tank, a fountain, a sheltered seat may well complete the scheme.

Away in the country the hand of the architect is often too little in evidence. What visions can be conjured up of a station homestead! The house and other features marshalled on broad lines, with ordered courts and shady gardens; the long level ridge of the tithe barn—no; the wool shed—the wind pump, the tanks, the great silo binding the group, a graceful landmark from afar, the stable yard, the garage court, the lawns and flowers kept flourishing by slow canals, with well placed trees leading up to and completing the scheme. Too often the haphazard planning suggests that great opportunities of increasing the pleasures of life have not been recognised, but the vision will be realised in time.

The third class, the suburban home, falls as a compromise between the other two. The area and frontage of site, its rocky steepness or otherwise, must exert a strong influence. When frontages are narrow, surely groups of houses are in every way better than innumerable small detached units? And on comparatively level ground, squares and courts running back from the road and surrounded by these groups have proved a sound system of development.

Now let us go indoors. Are we proud of the average present-day interior ? The principal rooms are almost universally overdone. Generally not too large to begin with, they are often crowded with superfluities. A judicious and drastic weeding out of 'pictures' and 'ornaments' and useless moveables would make many rooms better places to live in. The artificial lighting also often leaves much to be desired.

That boon, electric light, has been abused and seldom rightly used. To provide light of the right colour, strength and in the right place is a problem worthy of study. Perhaps pendant fittings will be abolished, and in the universal use of beautifully shaded standard and table lamps, a solution may be found.

There is another point—colour. In this sunny land, sunshine asks for colour and gives us priceless shadows. Why not take advantage of this? What architectural decoration can compare with the display of shadow from our thin-leaved trees on a blank washed wall? Or the reflections on the soffit of wide roof eaves? None at all. Nature will do it all for us if we have the wit to let her. And for colour, flowers and trees, lawn, stone and rich earth and painted shutters perhaps, and behind the window sash bars a peep of curtains—a reminder of the chintzes and the chesterfield inside.

The value of simplicity has been urged and, were examples needed, there stand in all the older settlements and in Macquarie Street, Sydney, airy, roomy, comfortable houses, full of dignity and tasteful charm. And of more recent building, but of the same good family, up the Mountains and the North Shore line and nearer the Harbour too, the seed is sown. Simplicity!

LESLIE WILKINSON.

BUILDING "PURULIA"

FROM the window where I am writing, there is spread to the southward, beyond olives and oleanders in the garden, a greater part of the city of Sydney reaching to the horizon well nigh twenty miles away. A spur of the ridge, whereon "Purulia" rests, hides the heart of the city, and another spur hides Parramatta, Sydney's most western suburb. In all that vast array between the spurs, I do not know a beautiful building. On a morning like this, when the sun is opening flowers in the garden and ripening nectarines in the orchard on the hillside, those buildings are merged in loveliness. It is a delicate loveliness, rose-grey through smoke-haze, an elusive line of blue water and pale-yellow sand hills at the verge. There are monumental gasometers in the middle of the expanse appearing not much bigger than oleander buds. Well though I know the contours, seldom a month passes without a cloud shadow revealing in silhouette an unsuspected hill covered with buildings. Goldfinches are balancing on thistleheads amidst the waving grasses, and a peewit has lit on the next window sill and is pecking its reflection in the glass.

Seated thus, I find it hard to write about domestic architecture in Australia. To tell the truth the title saddens me. Into my mind come memories of sunny little towns scattered over the countryside, each littered with sorrowful buildings, each hideously ugly. In those little towns there are people, fine simple folk, who look to the city for their sovereign guides. And I feel we have failed them. I know very well that I should begin by blaming domestic architecture in Australia for being the most this and end by praising it for being the most that. Not that I would leave you, dear reader, in a quandary. No. It would be just because I would be writing without enthusiasm. And, like architecture, words written without enthusiasm are dull. So I shall write a confession, the confession of an architect. Confessions are never altogether dull provided they are truthful. And I shall tell you about building "Purulia." In it you will find the very thoughts that filled your mind when you likewise built a house for yourself.

Let us begin when a Peninsular and Oriental steamer, Sydney bound, reached Fremantle. The first glimpse of a town in my native land aroused disquietude. I was returning with a technique gathered from the masterpieces of Italy and the magnificent modern architecture in the United States of America. With that first glimpse my ambitions tottered. It was not the galvanised iron and cheap materials, but the colour, form, ornament and the commonplace dullness of it all

that proved distasteful The Port was a sure indicator of the fashions and maxims inland. It was impossible to imagine the methods of the masters in Australia. Not yet, I thought, can the simplicity of the greatest styles adorn cities destined to rejoice under beneficent cornices and in arcaded courtyards. The sight of Fremantle recalled Toronto, which was all of Canada that I saw. I could not endure more and fled back over the border to the elegant "colonial" and the beautiful Library of Massachusetts. At the moment when I stepped ashore in Australia I would gladly have boarded a ship returning to Europe. Fortunately for myself, there was not one at the quay. That first impression proved right. The Equitable Building, which was designed by an American architect, was still the most spacious, the most massive, the most admired building in Sydney, just as it was when I was a boy. Standing before its ungainly front I saw clouds of dust rising in Chestnut Street, Philadelphia where workmen were pulling down a structure similar to the one before me. It had outlived its day. Stately architecture had risen around it and the ugly building pleased no more. Let us be just. With all its coarseness and bad proportions, it prepared the way for a splendid and graceful style; and the building in Sydney is planned on a generous scale and is not flimsily built.

Round the corner in Moore Street, the central place in Sydney, facades were building of a fashion that had long since been discontinued abroad. And yet rivetting machines were clattering like a swarm of cicadas on steelwork high in the air. That prudent dame, the Mistress Art, crosses the sea warily. She needs to be assured of a welcome before she journeys hither. She must know that a people, who are yet engaged in the titanic task of settling a continent, and whose energies lie most in wheat and wool and water, are not ready, despite the magnitude of two huge cities, to receive the plums carried in her basket.

During the first few weeks of my return to Sydney, I found myself hastening to the top of King Street, downcast at the spectacle of my future. At the top of King Street, whither I returned again and again, I found joy, hope and determination in contemplating St. James' Church and the old barracks. each bearing a name I have come to love and revere—L. Macquarie, Esq. Governor. One night I sat on the turf at the foot of the statue of Queen Victoria which stands midway between the Church and Barracks. Overhead, the dark folds of a robe, moulded in bronze, reared like vaulting shafts into the sky and a sceptre held in the Queen's outstretched hand reached beyond my

feet. There I watched the moon rise and reflected on my future course:

"Melbourne," I said to myself, "is a city where orderliness in streets and public gardens promises a love of symmetry. Moreover, there is in the architecture of the southern capital a restraint and sobriety which, notwithstanding a strange admixture of art nouveau and parochial ideas, permits an approach to the grand manner more readily than may be expected from the haphazard styles prevailing in Sydney.

"In Sydney, where the ugliest buildings are received with the same tolerance as the beautiful, there is a rock-like heedlessness on which break waves of ideas intended to bring nearer that glorious future foretold by Governor Phillip on Landing Day and echoed by orators who guide the destiny of the Pacific Pearl. Impatient artists would have us believe here is a catastrophe. But this tolerance may well be the dawn of a cosmopolitan outlook; that heedlessness the prelude of a Mediterranean-like ease."

Then the moon, which had been hidden behind the Barracks cleared the roof and flooded the buildings on the Square with silvery light. "Architecture," I continued, "is the art nearest humanity and therefore next literature which is, in the words of Anatole France, humanity itself. Architecture is nearest humanity because it is useful. Yet usefulness is at once its strength and failing. Architecture is most to us when useful and greatest when, like other arts, it is useless.

Australia would be all the better for some useless architecture. True! there is a Neo-Greek temple, on a knoll in a Tasmanian valley, which is useless. And the majesty of its uselessness uplifts one's joy in architecture. This temple, one likes to imagine, was built for no other purpose than to be-jewel the Grecian beauty of the surrounding hills. Perchance an architect was riding through the valley one day with Lady Franklin and one or the other said: "Let us build a temple on yonder knoll," and when it was finished they called it "Lady Franklin's Museum." Someday we shall build a beautiful building to celebrate a victory. And its utter uselessness shall release us for a moment from our too practical thoughts. Peradventure this building shall restore a love of symmetry in New South Wales, although the simple symmetry of the Barracks across the Square arouses more contempt than admiration. What a satisfying task it would prove to carry on the beginning made by Greenway, Macquarie's architect, who designed the Barracks and the Church! What a delightful prospect to return to the work be-

fore 1840 when symmetry, scale and simplicity vanished. Doubtless this early work would provide a joyous and practicable foundation on which to found one's style."

Regarding the Barracks with gratitude, I exclaimed: "I shall carry on the tradition laid by Greenway, instead of hopping from fashion to fashion."

At these words a friendly policeman appeared from behind the statue and said: "Better move on, sir! Sitting on the grass is not permitted."

Very soon after that night in Queen's Square I began exploring the country beyond Parramatta and found an architecture that excited wonder and delight. It was late-Georgian adapted to the County of Cumberland. In Maryland and Virginia I saw and drew many beautiful old homes, but I saw none more beautiful than some I know on sublime hill-tops in the counties of Cumberland and Camden. It is true that in details the Cumberland homesteads are often crude, and in subtleties lacking, yet it is surprising to find how little these shortcomings detract when the whole is beautiful.

Here is a picture of the homesteads along the Cow Pasture Road: "Pioneer squires chose magnificent sites for their homes. They had no climatic rigours to contend with and feared no hostile invasions. Selecting the tallest hill upon estates presented by the Crown, they built with taste and imagination, settling their white-walled houses like snowflakes fallen on cushions of verdure."

There is no romantic attachment in my regard for these old buildings. I love them for their beauty. And I value them for the knowledge they are destined to spread. They are finer art than that which has followed them; and they have the attractiveness which age lends architecture. They are our precious heritage. I have drawn them lovingly, yet my drawings are as naught before the buildings themselves.

When the decision to build "Purulia" was reached I had seen most of the old homes in New South Wales and Tasmania. In the office, designs presented no difficulties. But when I came to design a house for myself, there were endless doubts and anxiety. Engaging ideas presented themselves, one after another, and it was likely the house would be a hotch-potch. The temptation to introduce beautiful detail, without sufficient restraint, led me to take "Clarendon" and use it as a model of simplicity. "Clarendon" is, I think, the simplest and one

of the most charmingly detailed old homes in New South Wales. "Clarendon" was built by William Cox about 1809, and faces the Hawkesbury river between Richmond and Windsor.

With "Clarendon" as a model of restraint in detailing the house I set to work on a plan. It was a fascinating task. First of all, I said to myself, " 'Purulia' must not be what is called a safe investment. Reason shall be excluded, and I shall follow wherever whim leads me on." Thus did I flatter myself. I had never been able to avoid reason when designing a house for another. That is a limitation which is almost universal throughout the British Empire. It is why St. Paul's is, in the words of a London Professor of Architecture, the only building in Britain that is great. Fortunately for the Empire, there is Mr. Lutyens, who is an artist, and who is able, I am told, to find in every house he designs an opportunity for a lark. I know of no more beautiful modern architecture within the Empire than his, and I rejoice that patrons flock to him knowing well what will happen. It is an encouraging sign that we are not altogether a reasonable people.

In New South Wales there were two men who built without regard for commonsense and practicability. One was Lachlan Macquarie who, whilst Governor between 1810 and 1821, erected public buildings too large and too expensive for the requirements and resources of the colony. Macquarie had an accomplished architect in Francis Greenway to design his buildings, which have become priceless since they enshrine our history and spread inspiration and knowledge. Macquarie's enthusiasm brought about his recall. Yet his downfall need not deter an architect who would follow in his footsteps. There is Mr. Lutyens as a star of hope.

The other was Horbury Hunt, an architect who worked in the style of the Gothic Revival. He was an artist, but his artistry was misdirected. He died poor, leaving, so it is said, several penniless clients. Had he left superb buildings his clients' misfortunes would, already, have become of no importance.

Having indicated how fine architecture may arise, it becomes me to direct persons who desire a masterpiece how to approach an architect in whom they perceive a brilliant artist. They should say to him: "Sir! Kindly build me a house. Here is my card. Good morning." Not another word. That is how, I like to believe, Stanford White received his commissions; and how Charles Platt and Russell Pope execute their gems. It is thus that in the United States of America is be-

ing born architecture which, I venture to say, is approaching and may surpass the flower of the Fifteenth Century.

Now in Australia architecture is, as yet, imperfectly understood. Our architects are, above all, reasonable. And reason does not produce masterpieces. You must not blame our architects. It is no fault of theirs if they have not produced a masterpiece. The time is not ripe. The masterpiece will never be sprung upon you unawares. And when it does come, a century or two must elapse before its sovereignty is universally recognised. The masterpiece in architecture demands great work from many hands. These hands have to learn to fashion beautifully, making many splendid failures before the gem is born. That is why our Federal City cannot have the immediate masterpieces that politicians are wont to expect. Nevertheless, I believe, that beautiful architecture will arise and be loved in Australia at no very remote time. True, it is enthusiasm which prompts my belief and, perhaps, the significance of geography. I believe we are destined to learn more and more from folk who dwelt by the Mediterranean shore; and less and less from our British ancestors. Our habitude is no longer overcast with the dark snow cloud; we are no longer on an island. America has turned to the Mediterranean. I would have us turn likewise, and from that unfailing source gather also maxims and customs at one with a sunny sky.

I venture to go further even than a regard for beauty. It is possible that, when passing along a street bordered with joyous buildings, we shall take masterpieces with as little concern as an Italian, who, sitting at the opera, never pauses in his discourse on his love adventures whilst a beautiful melody passes his accustomed ear. Beauty shall have become part of our lives. Sometimes a beautiful building shall distract our attention from intimate affairs and we shall enjoy its beauty as unconcernedly as we enjoy the tender blue which appears through a break in a silvery sky.

Thus spake the patron when I planned "Purulia." And the architect was enraptured with his grand style. But, sharing all the other's affairs, he knew what pitiful limitations there would be to such lofty enthusiasm. The architect listened to the voice of Reason and reckoned the cost. That ended the attempt to produce a masterpiece.

Nevertheless there are brother architects who admire "Purulia." They flatter me. The truth is that a few years hence "Purulia" must appear to critical students as a crude attempt to fashion a beautiful

cottage. In their eyes it will be laden with unpardonable shortcomings. I know this to be true because, although one must be of one's own time and country, it is possible to see a little way into the future, especially when that future has been reached in the swifter half of the globe. And if the young architects, emerging from the school under Professor Leslie Wilkinson, think otherwise, I shall be disappointed.

The plan of "Purulia" is the plan of a maidless flat. I had overheard many doleful tales of dwelling in the suburbs without a maid. Maids, the mistress said, were vanishing. It seemed likely that there would soon be none at all. So "Purulia" was planned without accommodation for a maid, and without intention of holding one. That simplified arrangements and led to a better plan. Now the kitchen is the most used and, commonly, the least pleasant room in a house. That is because the maid is only in process of vanishing. As society exists, it is impossible to tell who will be most in the kitchen. The kitchen becomes more and more a family room and the seat of universal chores.

A study of the history of the kitchen in New South Wales from 1800 to the present day throws a clear light on the progress of humanity towards equality. I have traced at length this progress, both social and architectural, in my history of the Cow Pasture Road. Briefly told, the kitchen began its advance from beneath a detached roof at the rear of the house. First, it entered a wing facing a courtyard; then it slowly moved along the wing side by side with the struggle for political freedom. By the time all men were equal at the poll, the kitchen was separated from the parlour only by a narrow servery.

At "Purulia" the kitchen adjoins the living room and the front door. There is nothing to distinguish it from other rooms save the utensils of its usefulness. It is, perhaps, the pleasantest room in the house for it is where the most useful work is done. Yet the sight of this kitchen does not incline me to think that equality is any nearer. I believe equality is an illusion. As it appears to me the universe is peopled with artists, those who have no fine enthusiasms, and a multitude who are neither one nor the other. The artist happens anywhere and in every occupation.

When I have the kitchen to myself and am engaged in cooking, the sight of a saucepan brings to mind an old friend who was both artist and cook. His name was Hakim. He was a Syrian who, while still

a young man, settled in Chelsea, bringing a fortune and a great love of cooking. Having established himself in a house, Hakim set to work preparing dinners at which painters were the most frequent guests. No one in Chelsea remembered such wonderfully flavoured dinners. Artists flocked to them until Hakim's fortune was spent. Then painters, who could afford the feast, invited the cook to dine. Hakim was the first guest to arrive. He came early in the morning and spent the day in the kitchen. In the evening he laid one dish after another on the table with an air of joy and sorrow so exquisitely mingled that one had a delicious sensation of vandalism whilst consuming his masterpieces.

The construction of "Purulia" was not uneventful. It is a rectangular cottage covered with an unbroken hipped roof. As the walls arose square, bleak and factory-like, consternation filled the souls of neighbours dwelling in multangular villas. By the time the brickwork was finished their indignation could not be contained. They foresaw depreciated values all along the road. A confidental appeal to Shire Councillors showed the neighbours that there was no building regulation to prevent a four-square dwelling. The builder, who had hitherto showed sympathy, made a gesture of despair when the roof was tiled. I had found an artist making shingle tiles and from him secured curled, uneven, overburnt, and many-coloured rejects from myriads of flawless tiles. They range from grey-white, yellow, orange and red to purple-black. The roof of "Purulia" is like a venerable Persian rug of quiet and glowing colour. Little irregularities cast little black shadows under the rows and give beautiful texture to the roof. Sometimes I hear explosions in the road early in the morning, and looking from a window, see the artist in his automobile come to admire his handiwork.

Charmed though I am with his roof, tiles of the Roman pattern would have been more beautiful. Alas! so far as I know there is not a Roman tile in New South Wales. What sad mischance led to the almost universal Marseilles pattern I am unable to say. It was a calamity for Australia. To think that France, the land from whence spreads fine thought and beautiful works, should have given us ugly tiles which she herself, to her shame be it said, uses only on flimsy structures, might well move us to reproach her with being commonplace where we look to her as a tutelary fount.

One day whilst the artist was arranging tiles on the roof, two pigeons lit upon the ridge. They conversed in words that reminded

me of the name "Purulia" given to a little old house in Tasmania. I liked the name for its second "U." There was another little house beside "Purulia," built by the same builder called "Jerusalem." That I liked too. So the pigeons gave the house the name of the one, and over the door of the little octagonal shelter where the wheelbarrow is housed, is inscribed the name of the other.

If you were to ask me what is most beautiful in Australia I would say—light. And if you were to ask me what is most beautiful at "Purulia" I would say—the reflected light on the eaves. Along the sunny northern wall there are white flag-stones; the eaves are white plaster; and the wall is white too; a subtle white with grey and gold in it. The sunlight on the stones is reflected on the plaster and the wall lends a golden glow to the reflection. And it is reflected light on plaster eaves that is most beautiful on Macquarie houses. The golden white of the northern wall is a foil to the garden. Now that gay flowers and fragrant shrubs merge wall with earth the neighbours who were loudest in their invective, come and lean upon the garden wall. Some laugh, others admire, and all resentment has flown. It is the garden that delights most. So I shall tell you about it, although gardening is an art of which I know little, or nothing, save that the most beautiful gardens have a lifetime's growth.

At the outset I had to decide whether the garden would be for one's own time or posterity. I determined to try and please both. In perambulations around the old homesteads on hilltops I had observed the trees and shrubs which reach a beautiful old age in the County of Cumberland. They are nearly all of slow growth. Around the boundaries of "Purulia" there are oleanders red and white. Between the oleanders and the northern front there are perpendicular poplars to balance the horizontal lines of the building. On the southern side the distant city will be framed through olives grown grey, twisted and fruitful. In a wide circle around the house there are oranges and mandarins. Camellias are slowly uprearing dark glossy leaves before the wall spaces. Beside the stone-flagged path bordered with box, that leads from gate to door, there are fragrant shrubs, diosma, rosemary, lemon verbena, lavenders. To pluck the fragrant leaves and to inhale their perfume, as one passes by, is a pleasure that dwells long in one's memory. It is the perfume of gardens that endears them most.

The grape twines over the pergola; the paths are bordered with red China roses and purple flags; lemon thyme hides under a lilac sheet

the spaces where lawns are oftenest placed. Throughout the garden red and white predominate. There is no yellow save in a corner where grows a Persian briar. Because it is so difficult to control more than two colours on a building, yellow was abandoned. The result is beautiful but not, I think, more beautiful than if yellow had been included.

Now I would like to uproot this established garden and cover it with red China roses. Flourishing in all the old gardens this gay little rose was, I like to think, Macquarie's favourite flower. Betwixt its borders one may walk and meditate without heed for its welfare. It defies Nature's deprivations.

Here then is "Purulia," awaiting the mellowing of Time and the uprearing of leafy trees.

When I look up from the table and see the old brown mahogany, the Piranesis on the wall, the oleanders outside bowed down with great clusters of white and red flowers; when the hum of a myriad bees, toiling amongst the thyme, enters through the window, I say to myself: "Here is tranquillitude." Yet it fills me with discontent. No longer does the house and garden awaken curiosity; the creative work is done. A bare wall, an empty room, vacant site, blank canvas or paper—these are exhilarations in an artist's mind.

Yonder, beyond the olives, amidst the ugliness, there is discontent, timid, reluctant, often scornful, yet sublime. To the discontent which is in all of us the beautiful pictures within this book may add a little and, like flowers by the roadside in which we rejoice, lead us on.

W. HARDY WILSON.

PLATE II.
Architect unknown.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Tusculum," Potts Point, Sydney.
Residence of Orwell Phillips, Esq.
Built 1835.

PLATE III.
Architect unknown.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Rockwall," Potts Point, Sydney.
Residence of Mrs. Russell-Nolan.
Built about 1835.

PLATE IV.
Architect: Edmund Thomas Blacket.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Greenoaks Cottage," Darling Point, Sydney.
Residence of J. R. Smith, Esq.
Built in the late forties.

PLATE V.
Architects unknown.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"The Octagon," Darling Point, Sydney.
Residence of H. S. Holt, Esq.

PLATE VI.
Architect: J. F. Hilly.
Photograph by J. Paton.

"Carrara," Rose Bay, Sydney.
Formerly Residence of George Boyce Allen, Esq.
Built 1860-70.

PLATE VII.
Architect: J. F. Hilly.
Photograph by J. Paton.

"Carrara," Rose Bay, Sydney.
Formerly Residence of George Boyce Allen, Esq.
Built 1860-70.

PLATE VIII.
Architect: J. F. Hilly.
Photograph by J. Paton.

"Fiona," Double Bay, Sydney.
Residence of the late Sir Edward Knox.
Built 1865.
Porch added later; G. A. Morell, architect.

PLATE IX.
Architect: J. F. Hilly.
Photograph by J. Paton.

"Redleaf," Double Bay, Sydney.
Residence of W. H. Mackay, Esq.
Built 1860-70.

PLATE X.
Architects: Kent, Budden & Greenwell.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Terhyn Worthle," Killara, Sydney.
Residence of Mrs. S. Channon.

PLATE XI.
Architect: Walter Newman.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Keston," Kirribilli, Sydney.
Residence of Henry Campbell, Esq.

PLATE XII.
Architect: B. J. Waterhouse.
(Waterhouse & Lake.)
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"The Crossways," Centennial Park, Sydney.
Residence of Dr. Gordon Craig.

PLATE XIII.
Architect: B. J. Waterhouse
(Waterhouse & Lake.)
Photograph reproduced by Harold Cazneaux

"Ailsa," Neutral Bay, Sydney.
Residence of the late Captain Robert Craig.

PLATE XIV.
Architects: Manson & Pickering.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Yandooya," Bellevue Hill, Sydney.

PLATE XV.
Architect: Harold Joseland.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Craignairn," Wahroonga, Sydney
Residence of Mrs. W. S. Strang.

PLATE XVI.
Architect: W. Hardy Wilson.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Purulia," Wahroonga, Sydney.
Residence of W. Hardy Wilson, Esq.

PLATE XVII.
Architect: W. Hardy Wilson.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

Living Room, "Purulia," Wahroonga, Sydney.
Residence of W. Hardy Wilson, Esq.

PLATE XVIII.
Architect: W. Hardy Wilson.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

Living Room, "Purulia," Wahroonga, Sydney.
Residence of W. Hardy Wilson, Esq.

PLATE XIX.
Architects: Wilson & Neave.
Photograph by J. Paton.

Entrance, "Eryldoun," Gordon, Sydney.
Residence of E. G. Waterhouse, Esq.

PLATE XX.
Architects: Wilson & Neave.
Photograph by J. Paton.

Mantelpiece, "Eryldoun," Gordon, Sydney.
Residence of E. G. Waterhouse, Esq.

PLATE XXI.
Architects: Halligan & Wilton.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Winburn," Bellevue Hill, Sydney.
Residence of M. B. Halligan, Esq.

PLATE XXII.
Architect : John L. Berry.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Denholm," Gordon, Sydney.
Residence of John L. Berry, Esq.

PLATE XXIII.
Architect: John L. Berry.
Photograph by Harold Casneaux.

Entrance, "Denholm," Gordon, Sydney.
Residence of John L. Berry, Esq.

PLATE XXIV.
Architect: J. F. Hilly.
Photograph by J. Paton.

Waterfront Entrance "Redleaf," Double Bay, Sydney.
Residence of W. H. Mackay, Esq.
Built 1860-70.

THE RECOGNITION OF ARCHITECTURE

HOW strangely do we diminish a thing as soon as we try to express it in words"—Maeterlinck's remark in the "Treasure of Humble," applies with stinging force whenever I see a painter, sculptor, or architect trying to make himself understood by descending to the use of the mere hieroglyphics of language and entering into the narrow ways of literature.

The broad fields of form and colour, silent, various, and most of them quite undefiled, with distant visions of unexplored possibilities, are the legitimate, perhaps the only domain in which a worker in the graphic arts can either hope to express himself or offer his fellow men any means of understanding his work and its purpose. And so all artists best express themselves in the medium in which they think with the greatest ease, and no written explanation will carry conviction as completely as the intimate study of their work.

The student of architecture to-day generally gets mental indigestion in trying to gorge himself with a pile of historical literature instead of steeping himself in the joy of drawing all the ornament he can get hold of—that is, real ornament, not mechanical repetition of enrichment. If a man knows his ornament and can draw it, even badly, and is always doing it, he will have found the only way to see buildings and design them with the grace that requires no enrichment. That grace is the finest of all, born of the mind that is trained to think habitually in form, and is kept fresh and resilient by the healthy pleasure of drawing attractive things.

You may ask: what are attractive things?—for the things that attract at one period of a man's life will fail to be of any value later. Given all attractive things, even bad, the mind of the architect in the making will gradually develop the selective functions. He became an architect because he could not help being one, and so habit of thought will carry his preference always in the direction of the truer and better art, for the affectionate study of art always makes for the virtue in it. This applies equally to those who work in it and those who live with it—to the sculptor, the painter, the architect and the craftsmen as well as to all those who buy and appreciate their work. This progressive power of selection is proof of development and the change can only be for the better. If mental change does not constantly and steadily occur, then it is a sign that the creative as well as the appreciative function is dead. For such unfortunates, the dreary conservatism of the crank and the has-been will be their portion to the grave. When a designer

in art stops changing his vantage point, he ceases to live as such and, like all who stop growing, is dead before he knows it.

Now this progressive change is very well worth considering in some detail, especially the phenomena that are clearly indicated in the associated arts. In music we have at times the infantile and partially deficient mind, with all the signs of soft immaturity, showing great executive and some composing ability. The same in mathematics, or rather on the arithmetical side of it. In painting this immaturity or mental deficiency has no chance, for though the understanding and handling of colour is almost purely sensuous, a long training, supported by a craftsman's natural talent, has to erect a very solid foundation before the artist can come to the true medium of his self expression; talent and facility, refined through many sacrifices, have to combine to carry him through the tunnel of self-consciousness to the higher levels where he can enjoy the rarified air in which only, with the serious gaiety of abandonment, production can best fructify. In sculpture the way is the same; the progress perhaps is slower; the road a little more difficult, although concentration is more easily possible. But in architecture there are many by-paths and cross-roads; there are many houses of entertainment on the way, and nearly all the roads that join it appear at first to be just as good as the main road, and often even appear a little more important. Therein lies the danger, for the rule seems to have been that it is on the latter half of the journey that the best work has been done. Only after many storms and much tribulation does the light shine on the architect's efforts, and so, as a general rule, his best work is done towards the end of his day, when sunset approaches and something of peace after the toil of ceaseless trial comes to allow experience to help to crystallize a happy thought. When we get the exception to this rule we find that it has only been because death threatened the genius of the man, and Nature, stimulated by the necessity for rapid fruition, acted in beautiful haste.

Architecture, therefore, is bound by strange fetters and beset with well defined side tracks that lead the most active and energetic away from the true road. It is the art that is so easily spread over the broad area of use and abuse; the art in which all are proclaiming the right way with large signs written in all languages, while all the time the true road has no need of words; it asks only for silence, beautiful form and the pure delicacy of colour.

Architecture is like misfortune, inasmuch as talking and writing

about it do not make it any better. Thought and action alone are needed. So, after all, words are useless, in fact, worse than useless in art. Whistler's art was degraded by the exact measure of his literary ability and his caustic wit. The memory of his wit will live—literature will see to that; his paintings seen through the perspective of Time will fade to nothing, although because of a peculiar quality in his most impudent works, there will arise some day a great decorative painter who will find in them his best inspiration.

It is truly claimed that when the printing press emerged from its incunabula, a staggering blow was struck at all graphic arts. It was architecture that first went down under it; mural decoration then received its greatest check and religion turned its back on both of them, having no further real use for either. Of course, the faithful did their best; but faith and religion, like all links in Time's chain, cannot change, simply because they are links and nothing more. Thereafter we had much building with very little architecture, and in the Renaissance this art found its best and truest expression in domestic work, where its most beautiful form must be searched for in all countries—the English homes, the French chateaux, the Italian villae. Turn to the modern types of these—they do not need to be catalogued or tabulated—and we see architecture so adulterated by building that in the majority of instances the art ceases to show any signs of existence at all.

Architecture can exist in the cheapest building, but given greater financial room, will flourish more readily if the seed be there to germinate. Modern practice has elevated building at the cost of architecture, and the vice of claiming advertisement as a constructive help to intellectual life has so befogged the understanding of middle-class minds that architecture with its helpful selective value is almost entirely forgotten.

It can, however, be brought to its own only by silent individual effort. The power of good work alone can do it; the persistent exercise of his own talent and the use of the best that is in him by even the least important of us will tell. And the isolation of Australia, geographically and climatically, will help. The importation of ideas from other countries cannot help us; they must be our own, born of our own necessities, our own climates and our own methods of pursuing health and happiness. For as the house is built, so will the life and comfort of the household be founded and ruled therein.

In the hands of the present-day architect rests much of the future happiness and health of the people, if he be good enough and great enough to give to them what they should have and not always what in their hurried ignorance they claim as their needs.

The lack of lateral space in the rooms people use during their hours of wakeful ease, the inconvenience in the service of food, and the waste of space and want of fresh air in all sleeping apartments, can all be economically cured by the thoughtful architect acting in obedience to the dictates of his art. The dwellers in good houses well designed would then show that elastic ease of aristocratic well-being which should be the true heritage of all good Australians.

In these days of departmental stores and their costly and misleading advertisements, all consumers are trained to buy only what they can see and examine; not that they have any knowledge or selective ability, but the idle pleasure of sight-seeing has so blunted their understanding that they have become timid and mistrust all but the noisiest. And so, most people pass the architect by just as they pass the medical man by at the times when they most need both. Often when a man marries, he builds a faulty house, and only when the symptoms of illness are too insistent does he call in the doctor. Architecturally built houses and preventive medicine—these are the best safeguards; yet few think they have need of either.

It is in the everyday things, the immediate surroundings of the people, that the various refinements founded in good architectural thought and design will be most valued, and it is in their omission that modern building threatens to cause home-making to be a heavier and more difficult task to good women, than in this enlightened age it should be.

We know that science and the special branches of it that apply to building (such as engineering construction) which are essential to good architecture, rise to the occasion under the stimulus of necessity; but the refining and beautifying power of architectural design—does that act as readily? I am afraid not. Yet there is a strong connecting link between them. Stephenson's dictum that "all real engineers are born and not made" he proved himself to be true, and history amply confirms him. Art is after all only the doing of a thing with distinction, and the highest distinction is obtainable from within and by the artist alone. Its only penalty is loneliness, and so we must cultivate a joy and interest in the contemplation of it, and take our way on

the road that many have trodden before, some with immediate reward, others with the reward long deferred. But even in our loneliness we can learn the lesson of true fellowship and helpfulness to all who struggle to express what there is of fruitful originality in them. We can remember that personal jealousy is the worst expression of the inartistic and unprofessional mind, but that artistic or professional jealousy springs from the virtuous desire to express what beauty there is in ourselves and, at the same time, strive for the purification of our calling, the protection of it from the charlatan, and commercial exploiter, as well as from the degradation of the pot-boiler.

Search for, praise and enjoy the good work of others; pass by in silence all the rest—if you are wise, you will pass by quickly. The sanity of art is its ready selective power of seeing all efforts and remembering only the good.

All artists are critics and only the best confine their critical faculties to their own work. The effect of this on the artist is often very depressing, but only to his conceit; his work cannot fail to improve. In the history of art as in that of literary culture and learning, we find that parallel effort, close fellowship and the atmosphere resulting from this friction is always helpful and sometimes essential to happy and complete expression. We find that art schools do not thrive within university walls, and also that art shrivels and dies when chained within the class-rooms of technical schools. The higher realms of painting and sculpture best find their homes apart from these, and architecture nests with them.

It is a stupid degradation of architecture to ask it to be a handmaid to engineering, and a proof that the majority of building practitioners are not architects, thus confirming a suspicion that some of the public have had for some time but have not willingly expressed.

Our National Gallery schools of art should include classes in architecture where all that can be expressed in drawing, the making of models and the analysis and synthesis of ornament would be taught; where students could prepare for the time when they could forget their history, omit ornament, and in free and eclectic splendour give to the world simple buildings of true purpose. Such schools could be the places where all work could be talked over with or without sound, and everything would be expressed in line, mass or colour and nothing need be written.

The Man in the Street and his objectionable half-brother the Prac-

tical Business Man of Common Sense would then be moved to respect art, and brought to admit that the satisfaction of greed, which is mercantile brigandage, is perhaps not the only virtuous modern channel for human activities.

A good architect must always be prepared to give much more value than he can ever hope to receive, and even the most successful will not amass great wealth as the immediate reward of his best work, so his pleasure must be in his work and his reward in the memory and contemplation of it.

Some idea of this must vaguely touch men and women. How instinctively the world loves a lover! Only because it blindly sees that he is piling up a heap of trouble for himself. Something of the same instinct prompts the world to applaud the young architect and foretell a great future for him, and sometimes to be foolish enough to entrust the making of architectural mistakes even to the youngest of us.

At some period in the careers of all architects (that is, of true architects) Enthusiasm is born in them. When it comes, let each cherish it, for if it dies the life of his art dies with it; but if, with care and the help of some fortunate surroundings, it is strengthened and enlarged, his value to the world is assured for all time and his daily work becomes his best memorial.

H. DESBROWE-ANNEAR.

PLATE XXV.
Architect unknown.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

"Ventnor," Collins Street, Melbourne.
Residence of Dr. Grant.

PLATE XXVI.
Architect unknown
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

" Ventnor," Collins Street, Melbourne.
Residence of Dr. Grant.

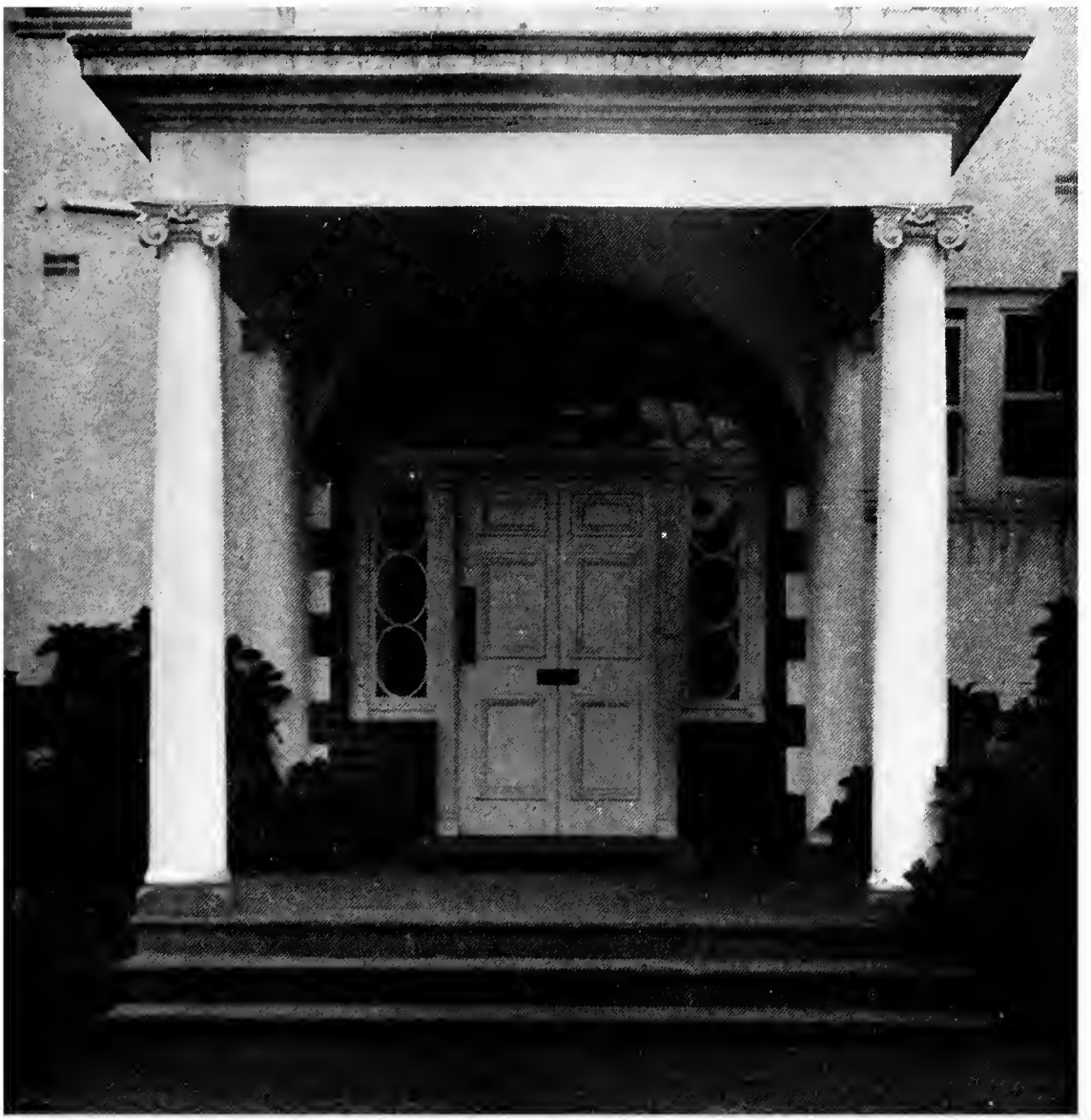

PLATE XXVII.
Architect: Walter R. Butler.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

"Waveney," Armadale, Melbourne.
Residence of Brig.-General Grimwade, C.M.G.

PLATE XXVIII.
Architect: Walter R. Butler.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

"Grong-Grong," Toorak, Melbourne.
Residence of Mrs. Ross-Soden.

PLATE XXIX.
Architect: Walter R. Butler.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

"Kamillaroi," Toorak, Melbourne.
Residence of Clive Bailleau, Esq.

PLATE XXX.
Architect: Walter R. Butler.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

Drawing Room, "Studley," Melbourne.
Residence of Dr. Herman Lawrence.

PLATE XXXI.
Architect: H. Desbrowe-Annear.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

"Broceliande," Toorak, Melbourne.
Residence of R. D. Elliott, Esq.

PLATE XXXII.
Architect: H. Desbrowe-Annear.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

Pergola, "Inglesby," South Yarra, Melbourne.
Residence of Rawson Francis, Esq.

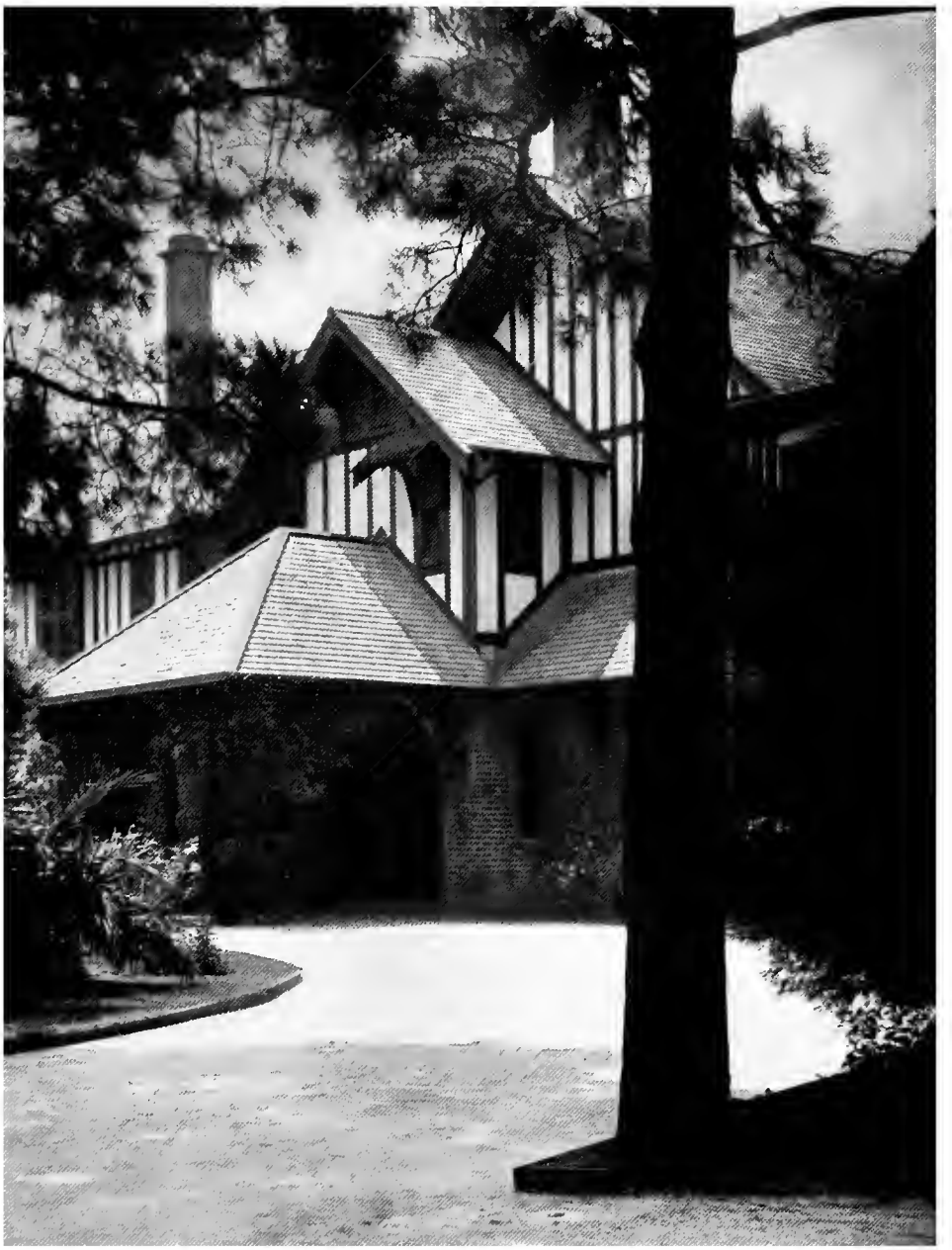

PLATE XXXIII.
Architects: Klingender & Alsop.
Photograph by Harold Cazneaux.

"Brie Brie," Toorak, Melbourne.
Residence of J. Sanderson, Esq.

PLATE XXXIV.
Architects: Klingender & Alsop.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

"Brie Brie," Toorak, Melbourne.
Residence of J. Sanderson, Esq.

PLATE XXXV.
Architects: Klingender & Alsop.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

Pergola, "Kilbride," Toorak, Melbourne.
Residence of L. K. S. Mackinnon, Esq.

PLATE XXXVI.
Photograph by J. Kauffmann.

Mantelpiece, "Clarendon," Hawkesbury River, N.S.W.
The Home of William Cox.
Built in 1809.
Mantelpiece now in the National Art Gallery of Victoria.

A PLEA FOR TRADITION

WHEN our forbears set to work in the forties to build themselves habitations, they had labour at command, but only the raw material of mother earth out of which to fashion them. The very elementals—stone, brick, clay, lime—had to be found; quarries had to be hewn, pits dug, kilns built for a start; and by each man for his own needs in many cases.

Anything they lacked in skill they made up in enthusiasm; for theirs was the zest of discovery and adaptation. Proprietor, architect, builder, and supplier of material were thus often one and the same; the completed work, however unassuming, was the product of one mind, and as such possessed of that unity of idea, so necessary for character in art, yet which circumstances often deny to architecture.

Economy of material, and still more the scarcity of selection, exercised a due restraint; any longings there may have been for embroideries of cast iron, or other stereotyped reproductions often miscalled ornament, had to be repressed; so that the result was simplicity and repose. Unity of idea and repose! Little more was wanting but time and a classic tradition in the back of the mind to develop the basis of a good native style, which was then probably nearer of attainment than at any time since.

Nowadays, it is the architect, if anyone, who is the guardian of unity and repose; but when the furnisher is allowed to claim the interior as his province, and the professional gardener the surroundings, there is no appeal but to Time, who is always working for these ends.

But how is it that the progress of the domestic arts has been subject to so many vicissitudes? Hardly a decade that has not had its phase, and each has been experimental, a departure not a development from precedent. There can be no doubt that this very pursuit of temporary vogue or eclectic adaptation from the past, subordinating appropriateness to sentiment or mere fancy, is the prime cause of our present difficulty in seeing our goal clearly ahead.

The age that discovered photography and its derived processes was bound to suffer an indigestion after its first orgy of illustration. It has been hard enough for the designer to shun the manifold seductions of the merely picturesque, and doubly hard for the amateur to keep his taste unmixed. Now it is to the amateur that we have to look for any wide improvement. Every collector discovers before going far that he has to specialize, to discard the general and search after the particular. Art is long, and it is better to know some form of beauty well than to have a nodding acquaintance with all.

The healthiest symptom of present day taste is the cultivation of the antique; not that this is a healthy process in itself nor one which can or ought to continue indefinitely, but because it is an instinctive return to the last period in which beauty and logic were combined in the design of everything of household use from a salt cellar to an armoire—a tacit admission that much of the work of the intervening period was not art, whatever else it might have been.

Many a simple soul cherishes a trust in mere antiquity which is often spurious, but what matter so long as the form and quality are there? What matter if the object is a copy of yesterday, so long as it is a perfect reproduction of a worthy model ? Indeed it is, in general, better so; for until modern manufacture becomes instilled with the intrinsic quality sought after in the antique, no forward movement on the same plane can be hoped for.

It is an extension of this cult to domestic architecture that is wanted. The collector of the forms of Chippendale, Sheraton, or Robert Adam ought not to rest content until he has placed them in surroundings which perfectly befit them, and to do so he must study this subject at first hand.

Ours has only been the experience of the older world in little; but with this difference, that where there has been no deeply rooted tradition to create a standard, the danger of recurrent modernism, the striving for novelty, which in anything so permanent as architecture wins at best such a passing success, has had little or no check.

Architecture more than any other art, since it also ministers to material needs, must develop in orderly sequence if it is to develop in any true sense. As nature perfects her types, so man his handiwork, by selection; but nature succeeds by selecting from within the same type, and in all its vigorous periods art has done the same.

Alas ! at this point we are no further than the recognition that there should be one type or series of types instead of half a score. Is a battle of styles necessary to determine the survival of the fittest, and if so, on whose side are the big battalions ?

We are treating of architecture as an art, and in art the voice of the greatest number is not the safest guide; but in architecture, or mere building if you will, as a popular necessity, the voice of the majority is overwhelming. The more need, therefore, for unity of direction among those who seek to lead, and without keeping step or following a beaten track, this is surely possible ? Let the original

spirits continue to pioneer if they will, but they should submit to some limitation in objective.

Analyse much that passes current for originality, and it will be found often enough that the line of least resistance has been taken. Most designers will admit that it takes more courage, in fact is far harder, to win recognition of success in symmetry and simplicity than in their reverse. To be bizarre is to escape comparison. Let us dare to be simple ! In this way style is more likely to be attained than by any conscious striving.

Simplicity may be more or less compatible with the mannerisms of other periods, but it is an intrinsic feature of Italian domestic work and of the English Georgian which springs directly from it. We need not draw the line too closely, for, broadly speaking, the architecture of the Mediterranean littoral is one in main essentials. Spanish patio, Italian cortile and loggia, Levantine atrium, and Georgian portico, whether they embody the lintel or the arch are alike in their æsthetic and practical function; deriving half their beauty from the play of sun and shadow and offering this alternative of comfort in season.

Racial traditions may make our English Georgian more readily assimilable; but climate points the way to the Mediterranean as our closest parallel—and climate is the dominating factor. Hence Georgian, adapted to the needs of a country of grey skies, offers us too little shade and too much window; and the happy mean, the line of our development let us hope, lies in the merging of those kindred types. Let us preserve the Georgian interior, if only as a background for Georgian furniture and utensils, while we adapt externals to the local conditions of temperature and light.

These externals do not stop short at the four walls, for architecture is at the mercy of its surroundings. No home is complete without a garden, if only as an intervening space to keep its neighbours at due distance; but to set a house among green lawns and flowers, without some co-ordinating idea, is scarcely more apposite than to exhibit a butterfly in a museum. Architectural outlines need the caressing of trees to temper their hardness, masses of evergreens for contrast and shade, water for reflection, in addition to the greensward which must form the basis of any scheme of open space. To accentuate, reveal, suggest or even to suppress architectural masses is a function of the skilfully planned garden, and in so doing it gains emphasis, background and contrast for its own features. Shades, murmuring waters,

seclusion, a hint of form in marble against the darkest greens; these are the notes, not of that arrogant form of artifice, bristling with balustrades and statuary and hot with colour, which often usurps the title; but of the true Italian garden.

Surely there is scope for our imagination here; especially among our valleys and foot-hills, where the tall cypress and the stone pine, the laurel and the myrtle, the orange and the pomegranate, grown to such goodly proportions; where the sober beauty of the olive in all seasons, the pageantry of the vine in autumn and the miracle of the almond in spring, create that very landscape which only lacks the seemingly unconscious art of structure, the congruity that defies monotony, the grace that springs from the perfection of one type patiently studied, the adjustment of simple means to simple ends, all so essentially Italian, to make the beauties of the Val d'Arno or the Conca d' Oro possible!

Must it ever be that modern material and modern change of taste shall disturb the serenity with which nature already wears the traditional glories of the older world? Perish the thought!

"Coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt,
Strenua nos exercet inertia, navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere; quod petis hic est. . . ."

W. H. BAGOT.

PLATE XXXVII.
Architect unknown.
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

"Clifton," Burnside, Adelaide.
Residence of Mrs. N. A. Knox.

PLATE XXXVIII.
Architect unknown.
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

"Clifton," Burnside, Adelaide.
Residence of Mrs. N. A. Knox.
Built 1851.

PLATE XXXIX.
Architect: Sir Geo. Strickland Kingston.
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

Carriage Porch of the Old Younghusband House,
North Adelaide.
Built 1850.

PLATE XL.
Architect: William McMinn.
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

" Montefiore," North Adelaide.
Residence of Harold Fisher, Esq.
Built 1880.

PLATE XLI.
Architect: William McMinn.
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

"Montefiore," North Adelaide.
Residence of Harold Fisher, Esq.
Built 1880.

PLATE XLII.
Architect: W. H. Bagot.
(Woods, Bagot, Jory & Laybourne Smith).
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

Presbytery, Hindmarsh, S.A.
Owners: Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

PLATE XLIII.
Architect: G. St. J. Makin.
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

The Corner House,
Ward Street, North Adelaide.
Residence of Guy St. John Makin, Esq.

PLATE XLIV.
Architect: G. St. J. Makin.
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

Living Room—The Cornet House.
Residence of Guy St. John Makin, Esq.

PLATE XLV.
Architect: W. H. Bagot.
Photograph by A. Wilkinson.

"Marlee," Mount Lofty, S.A.
Residence of Mrs. Culross.

THE ARCHITECT AND THE FUTURE

"In Art, as in life, the chief problem is a right choice of sacrifice."

IF Architecture is the "mirror of the people's needs," it is only reasonable to expect that domestic architecture would reflect a people's private life. Viewing Australian architecture in this expectation, a stranger might be excused for wondering a little about the Australian people. They began well. The early part of the nineteenth century was, if not one of the greatest periods of architectural history, certainly one of the most interesting; for it was then that the last flicker of instinctive architecture died away.

However little one may appreciate formality, which was its chief charm, it is impossible to deny our early colonial work the qualities of simplicity, directness, and honesty; perhaps like the times, it was inclined to be a little pompous, but, like the times its manners never failed it. Such of this architecture as still remains stands out from its surroundings, a relic of

". . . . those Georgian days
Whose style still breathed a faint and fine perfume
Of old world courtliness and old world bloom."

Things, however, have not changed for the better. The road travelled since then is beset with quaint and inconsequent deceits, and the journey, though relieved here and there by some excellent work, leaves on the whole an impression of chaos. If we pick our way back through its varying fashions, stepping warily between hard cold cement, and a ruddy Queen Anne, swashbuckling parapets, fortified porches, and thin plaster fronts, we find firm foothold only when we get back to the beginning of the century. Here at last is some reasonable unanimity, some sign of honest purpose free from affectation, a restraint and a quiet dignity which are not confined to the exterior alone, but are embodied in the plan.

Since then, in a climate so mild that almost any shelter will suffice, a society a little theatrical in its life, a little theatrical in its art, seems to have been dressing up much as children do who make believe It is difficult to look at some of the misbegotten imitations which people call homes, and believe that their builders were serious. It would be kinder to admit some humour, to think of them tongue-in-cheek, building for the amusement of generations to come.

But, to do justice, one must admit that these devious wooings of the strange gods of style are not peculiar to Australia. From the first

they have loyally followed British tradition, becoming in turn Gothic with the Pugins, Shavian in the eighties, and, like a chameleon on a tartan plaid, they have done their best to mirror more or less promptly the vogue of the moment, whatever it might be.

In recent years the persistence of the New York building journals has worn this loyalty a little thin, and American fashions begin to replace those of England. Long Island houses, a little self-conscious perhaps, endeavour to disguise their accent, and look at home on the shores of Sydney Harbour; while positive evidence of the influence of Virginia is afforded by some charming homes in the Blue Mountains. The best contemporary American work is so good, that it is to be hoped this influence will remain with us. That the mantle of Mr. Platt should fall in due time on Professor Wilkinson's pupils is a consummation devoutly to be wished, and in the light of circumstances not too vain to hope for. The influence of a University should make for restraint, and it would be pleasant to think that by this means the restlessness of domestic building is about to find repose, that it may become again the studied result of one idea, rather than the confusion caused by many.

It is not that the work has been imitative, but that it has been indiscriminate and unintelligent that really matters. For in architecture, as in all history, there is no growth that is not a restoration. All the men who have ever done anything with the future have had their eyes on the past. Our modern suburbs appear to scorn tradition. A study of them is apt to suggest that the architects, egged on doubtless by clients who may be excused because they know no better, have become committed to a rivalry, not of restraint, but of emotion; and the result has been Architectural Bolshevism, a deliberate irregularity, a confusion of materials, and an absorption in the wantonly picturesque. Motives, too, have been multiplied, and styles or periods piled one upon another with reckless extravagance; as if a man could not be heir to all the ages without putting his whole inheritance upon his house.

A more scholarly consideration of the problem must dismiss the romantic or picturesque, the deliberately irregular, in favor of a treatment having a dignity at least commensurate with the domestic life of the community.

Whatever charm the irregular or natural house may possess when set in a smiling country side, and under such circumstances there may be a reasonable excuse for it, it certainly produces a most depres-

sing effect when reiterated with monotonous variety on either side of continuous streets. Georgian taste endeavoured to give to a cottage the seemly dignity of a larger house. Since then, even the largest houses have been made to share the "accidental" charm of the cottage.

"Man" said Robert Louis Stevenson, "is a creature who lives not by bread alone, but principally by catchwords, a form of sustenance to which the half educated are peculiarly addicted." In no phase of life have catchwords provided more nutriment than in modern architecture. Under no circumstances have men found more difficulty in thinking and feeling for themselves. Most people know as little about architecture as they do about literature or philosophy. They do not ignore it; it exists in their eyes, perhaps, largely as a necessary evil.

If the reputation of St. James' Church or the Burdekin House depended on the Man in the Street, it would not last a fortnight. The standards of architecture are made and maintained by the cultured minority. Their interest and enthusiasm are so great that there is no chance of genius being ignored, or of their judgment being wrong. It is important that those who wish to distinguish between good and bad architecture, between the fleeting fashion of the day and the finer stuff that has been tried out by generations of enthusiasm and experience, should realise this fact. The public must learn to defer to the architect, and the architect must endeavour to be worthy of this deference. He must become again a director of fashion rather than the servant of another's caprice; recognising that if he takes his client's money he owes him, not a fawning acquiescence, but sound advice and cultured guidance. If they can do this, then the future is not without hope that we may win back something we have lost, that we may return to the old road we deserted and find again the old lamps we bartered so carelessly a hundred years ago. But in choosing the way back we must be wary, not only of false gods, but of false critics. Much of the popular criticism of domestic architecture is dangerously misdirected and quite undeserved, for the modern house is like matrimony in this, that it is most frequently assailed by those who have failed to attain it for themselves.

People who at the most have only achieved a somewhat illicit experience as tenants, will complain loudly of the shortcomings of their house and its architect—the shortage of cupboards, for instance. Clad in second-hand clothes, would they dare to call attention to the want of pockets? If one realises how few modern houses are planned and

built for those who live in them, and if criticism is confined to these alone, modern domestic architecture immediately takes its stand on a sounder footing, and so far as the best of it is concerned, comes out of the ordeal with credit.

What the future holds for domestic architecture depends, of course, on domestic life. To those who give consideration to signs and portents it seems likely that the simple life of which so many have dreamed is going to be thrust upon us. In the ensuing scurry for safety much may happen. The extravagance of the individual home may bring about its disappearance, just as the small shop is going out before the universal store.

Our present stage is one of transition, in which it does seem a little strange that people who are well content with the mangled results of a common laundry insist, at any cost and at any sacrifice, on their chop being cooked at home.

But the common kitchen may soon follow the common laundry, for we appear to be facing some serious necessary housing reform for the middle classes, and as they will have to build it out of their own pockets, their Daceyville when it arrives may have to be more economical in material and arrangement than that provided by a government department at the public expense.

Not only is the unit of cost of domestic life increasing, but efficiency is becoming difficult to obtain at any price. All the finer side of cooking, waiting, and housekeeping, so many of those simple things that go to the making of a comfortable home, readily obtainable by the last generation, are rapidly slipping beyond the reach of the individual householder. Perhaps it may be possible still to retain them, and with them much that makes life liveable, by some drastic adjustment of domestic requirements in the direction of communal living. Flats offer no real substitute for a house and garden, nor, if comfort and decency are to be obtained, do they dismiss the service trouble. A boarding house, even under the most favorable circumstances, is still a boarding house. Certain aspects of life are wholly private, others are better shared with our fellow men. The society of the future will make this distinction somehow or another. Possibly a happy mean might be found, if, say, for twelve separate houses and gardens one could substitute twelve similar houses, each shorn of dining room and offices. The houses planned on a crescent with a connecting covered way or pergola; and a central building containing a

dining hall, recreation rooms, maids' and housekeepers' quarters, a kitchen, a well equipped laundry, and all the necessary appurtenances. Each house having its own pantry and its own private garden could retain the possibilities of much of that inner personal life which is so reluctantly sacrificed in flat or boarding house. Ordered thus, social life would remain decent, become more manageable, and the service problem be reduced to less alarming proportions.

The best of maids, their work more easily organised, and their wages correspondingly increased, should be readily available. Two or three cooks at salaries comparable to those now paid to University professors and with commensurate skill and training, could appear like prima donnas on alternate nights. Three or four gardeners could keep the whole place blooming and manage some tennis courts as well. A lodge and gates would confer an air of respectability most gratifying to the house agent, and a watchman give security at night; while the housekeeper or manager would relieve twelve anxious women of all the cares of private housekeeping and twelve worthy men of the results.

Selected with care, such little groups might form clubs of enviable reputation, a four for bridge would be as easy to get as on a P. and O. steamer and bores more easily avoided. Family dinner parties and small dances, which under present circumstances are rapidly drifting from the house to the hotel, would be possible at any time and at the shortest notice. And room would be found for those unborn generations of children, barred from flats, without whom home is not worth the name nor a house worth building.

Something like this may be made to serve; economically, it may become necessary; practically, it may work. But when one comes to look it in the face, somehow the idea of private property, family life, one man one home, seems a finer vision. People may be forced to accept something less human, less particular, but they will probably only accept it as a deliverance, not as a desire.

R. S. DODS.

PLATE XLVI.
Architects: Hall & Dods.
Photograph by J. Peat Millar.

"Clayfield," Brisbane.
Residence of Mrs. J. Reid.

PLATE XLVII.
Architect : R. S. Dods.
Photograph by J. Peat Millar.

New Farm—Brisbane.
Residence of H. Robertson, Esq.

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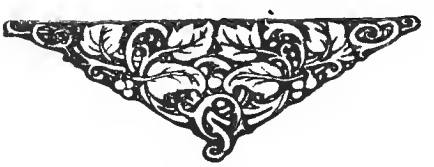

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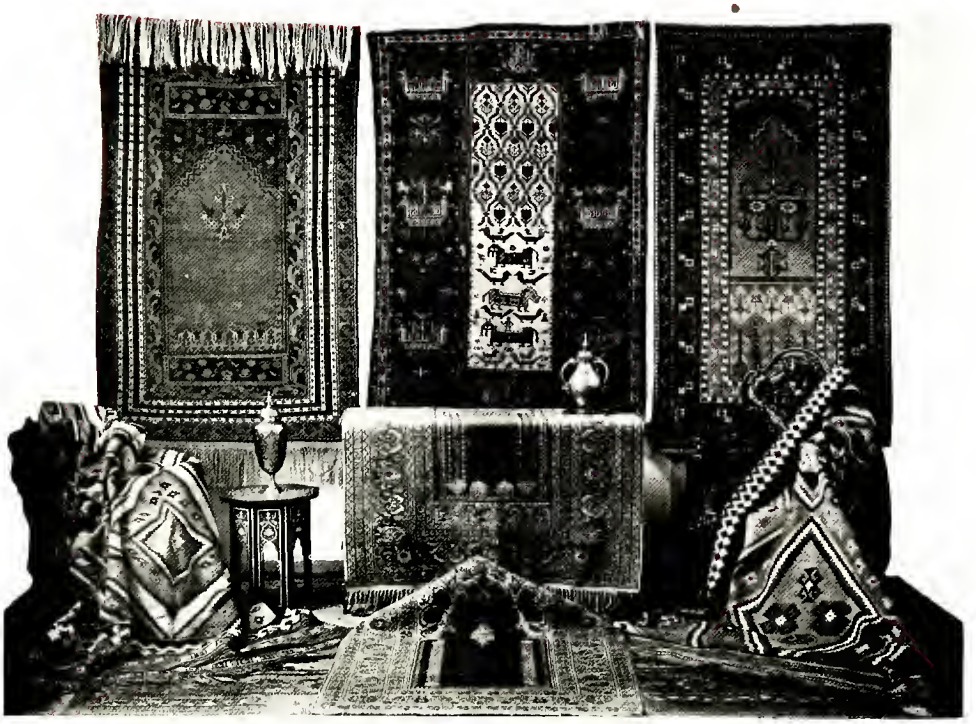

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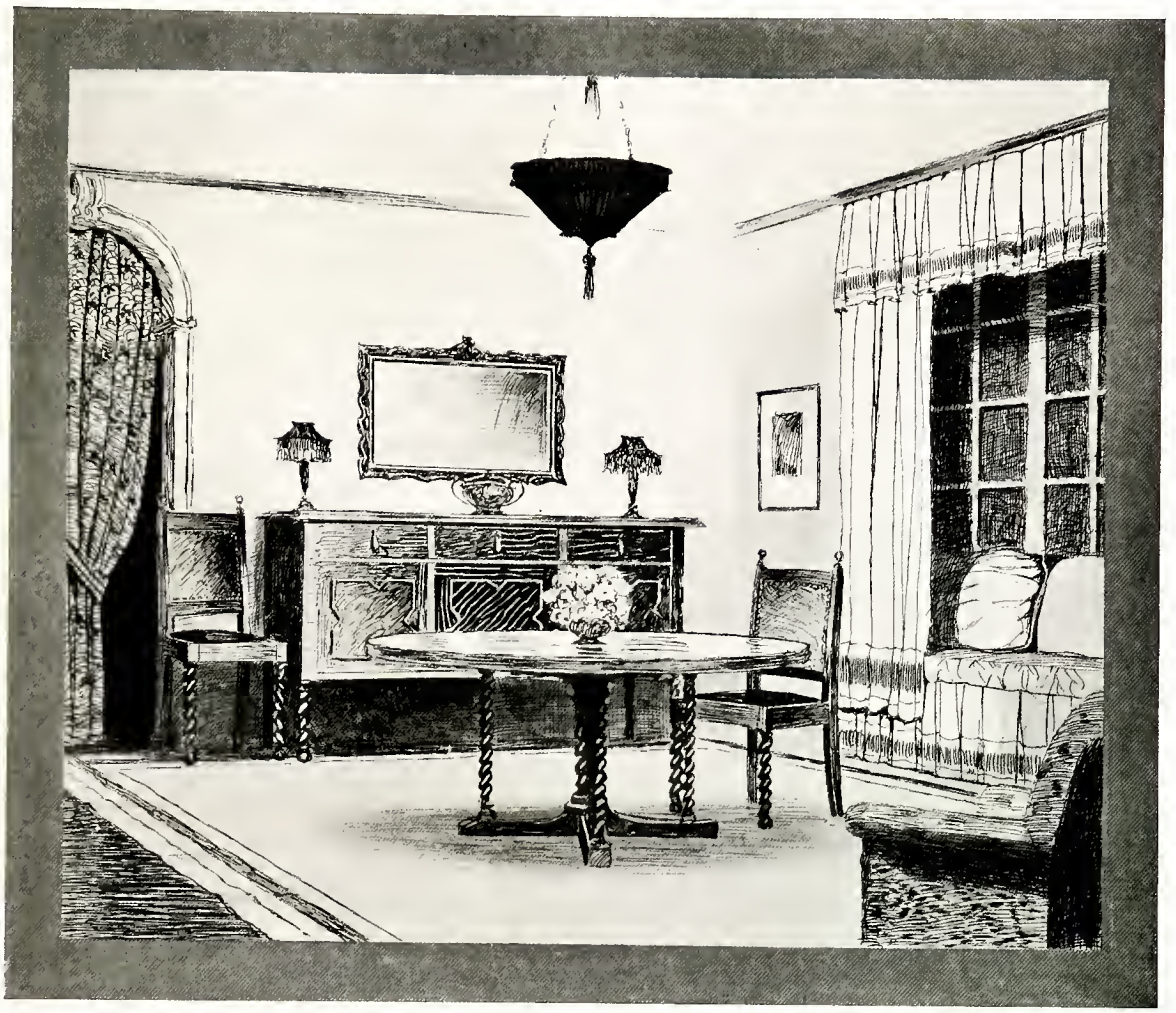

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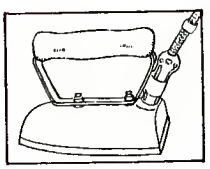

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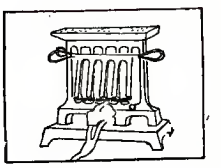

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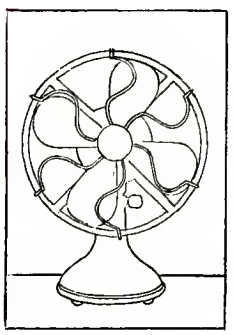

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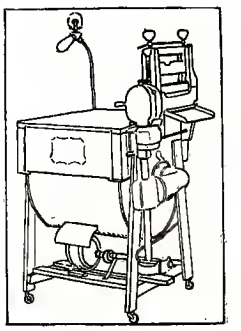

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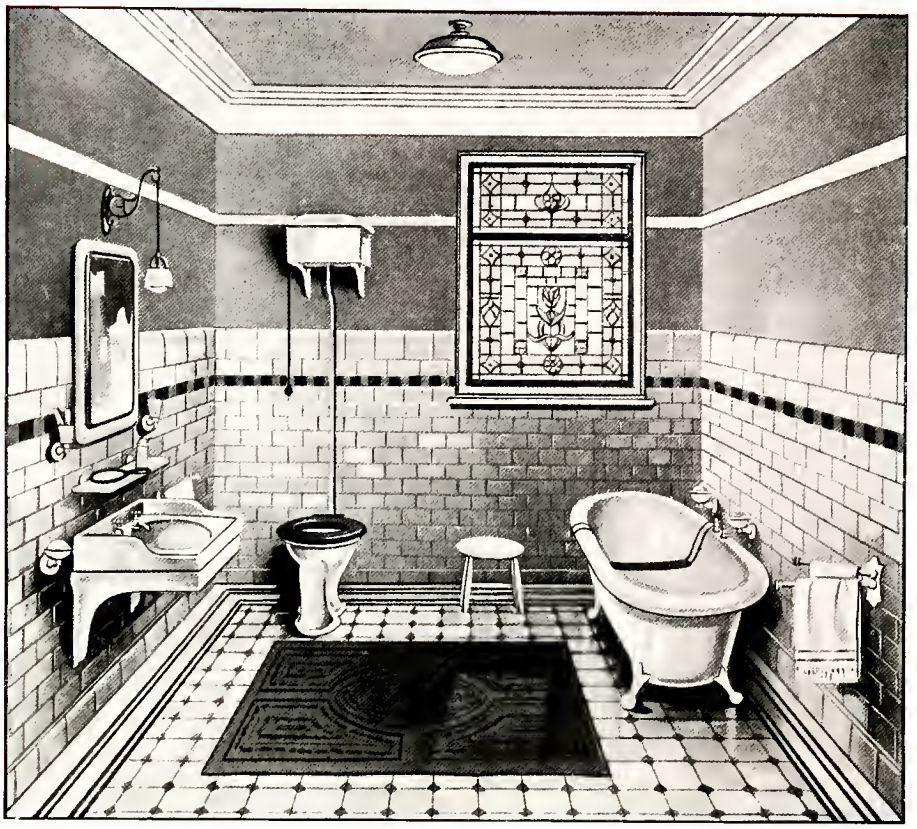

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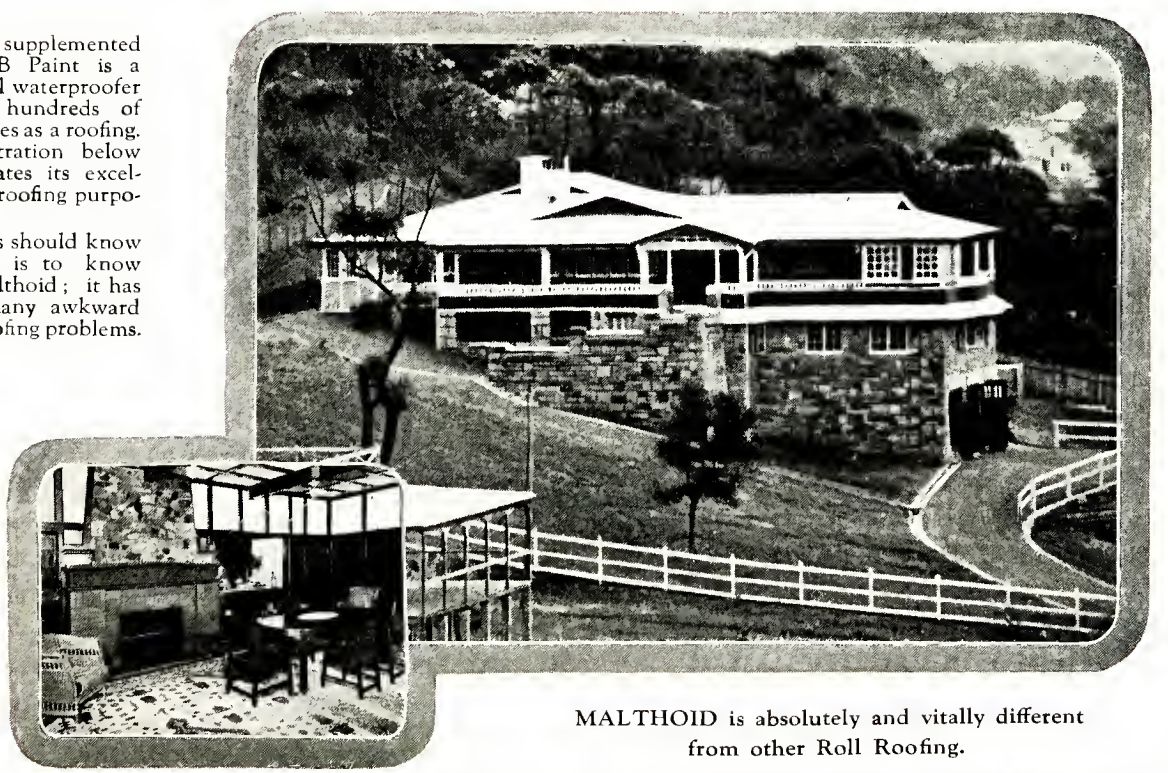

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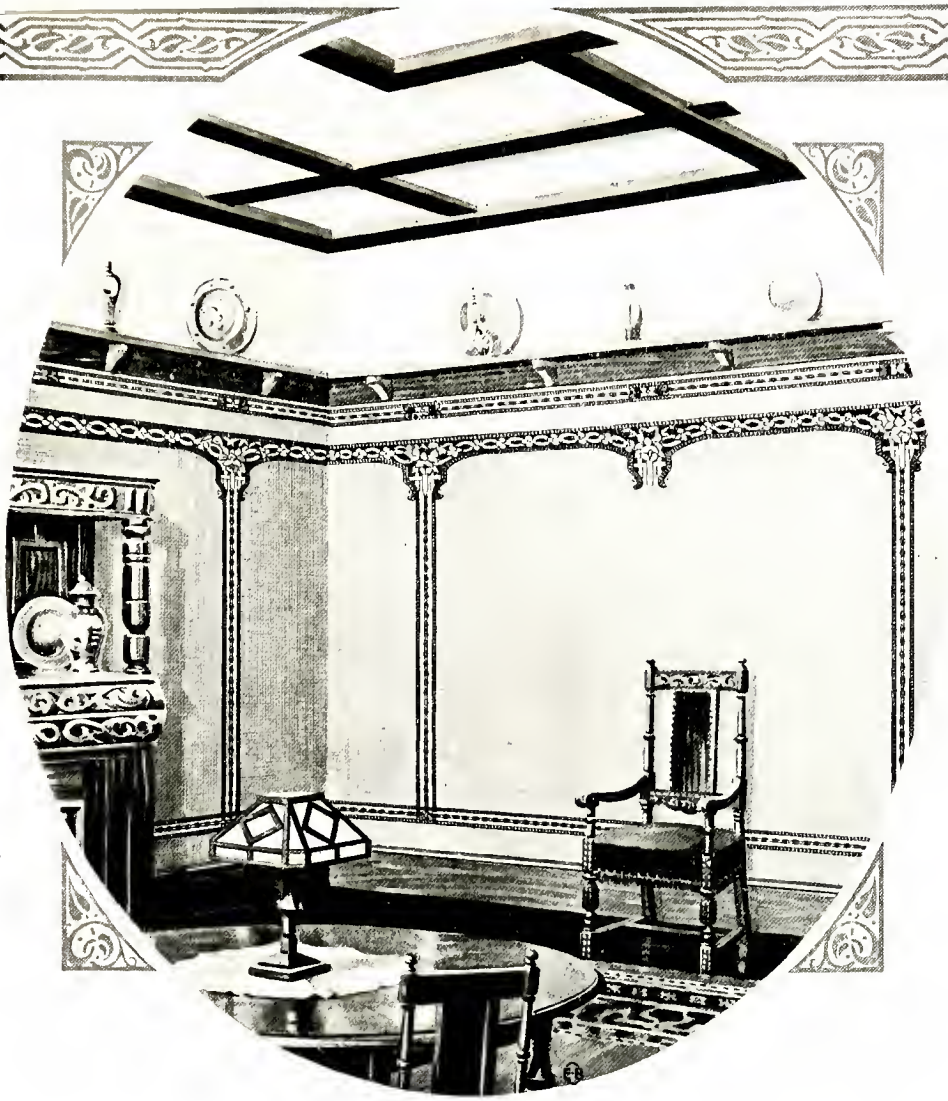

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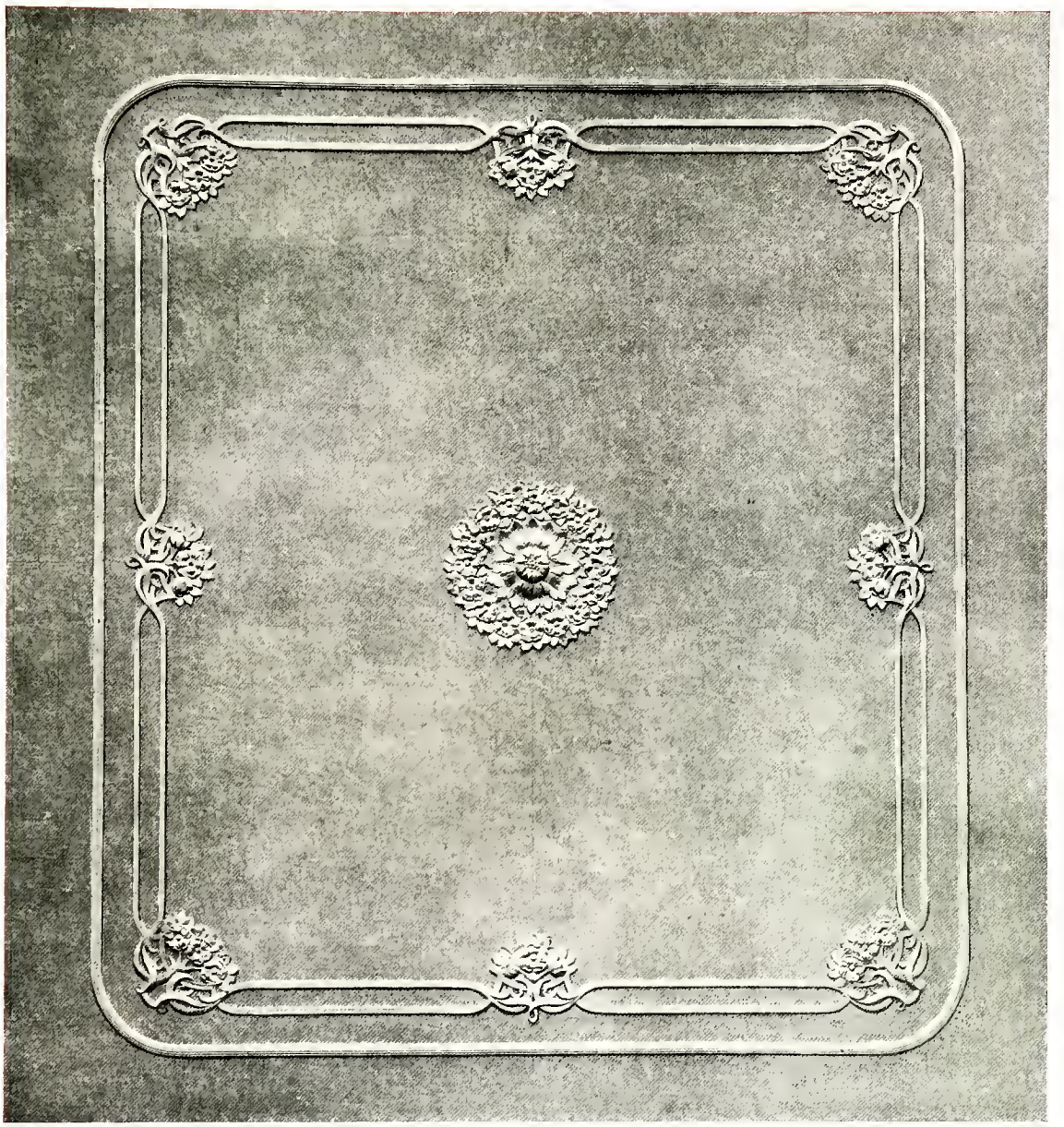

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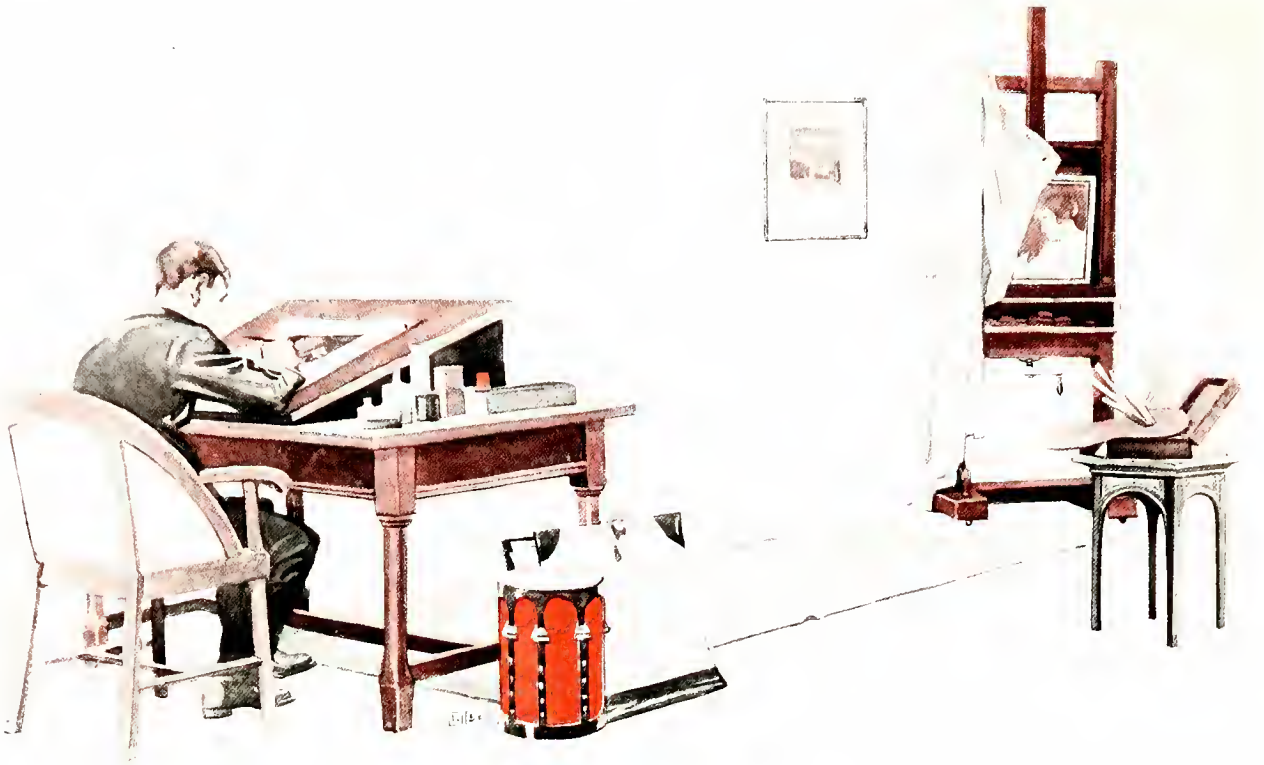

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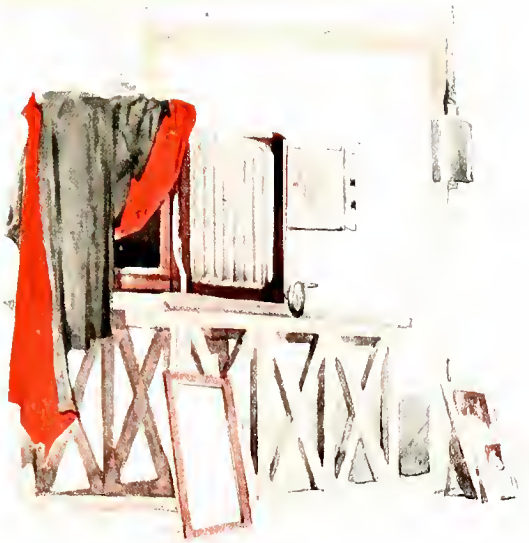

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