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Summary

Alteration to Swiss Bank Corporation, Zurich (pages 1-6)

The plan submitted in its time to the municipal authorities for their preliminary judgement and approved by them provides for an entirely new structure to be erected in stages on the site bounded by Talacker (below Café Althus) Paradeplatz, Bleicherweg, Talstrasse and Bäregasse. It has the form of a closed-in structure on the three street sides with a 5-storey elevation measuring 20 m. up to the roof moulding and a 3-storey courtyard section, each part with a recessed roof floor.

In the Paradeplatz-Talacker section are installed the management offices and the public rooms, such as reception rooms, guest room, exchange office, conference room, etc.

The other three sections are intended to house the departments proper, and are grouped in horseshoe form around the tellers' windows and glassed-in courtyard with handy horizontal and vertical connecting units.

In the upper storeys a few rooms being held in reserve for overflow business can, on completion of the whole structure, be let. The recessed attic floor is intended to house conference and lecture rooms. In addition, it will be possible to install there lunch-rooms with kitchen and serving-room.

New Federal Customs Administration Building in Berne (pages 7-10)

The construction plan comprises two buildings, one of which as the main structure was to be situated at the apex of the triangular building site and to present 7 storeys, whereas the other wing joined the main building perpendicularly and, somewhat set back, was to face Monbijoustrasse and to present 5 storeys. This plan made possible the preservation of the old trees. The main entrance of the whole building complex is situated in the main building. It is reached by pedestrians through an arcade about 5 m. deep; cars can drive up to the front. In the spacious main hall on the ground floor are situated the main stairway and the lifts. The ground floor of the wing is reached opposite the entrance. A door-keeper will furnish information and has charge of the main entrance. In the space in front of the main building is a ramp leading down to a basement garage. A second entrance for employees is situated in the middle of the 5-storey section on Monbijoustrasse. In addition to their different elevations, the two buildings are distinguished also as to their construction. Whereas the main building is a ferro-concrete framework with lateral glass panes, the 5-storey building facing Monbijoustrasse appears as a masonry structure with window openings inserted. The window parapets in the main building are recessed and are made of artificial stone slabs painted green. The wing on Monbijoustrasse is entirely faced with artificial stone slabs and provided with carefully angled window frames. The stair-well with the main stairs completely glassed in appears as a connecting structure between the two main units.

Olivetti Office Building, Milan (pages 11-16)

At the architects' disposal was a building site on a side street in Milan quite near the Cathedral Square, on which was to be erected the new office building of the Olivetti Business Machine Works known throughout the world for its outstanding products.

The architects situated the new building about 20 m. back from the street and flanked it to the right of the entrance with a three-storey wing, which could be situated on the boundary of the neighbouring site. A second wing is planned to the left. These two lower elements give the building its perspective and, together with the somewhat ascending courtyard, serve to emphasize and bring into prominence the main building. The entire ground floor of the main building was glassed in, in order to make it possible to see into the exhibition and into an old park situated behind the building. The open area created by setting the building back from the street provides room for a car park. To get into the basement garage, one drives through the ground floor of the main building and goes down along a gradual ramp behind the building into the basement, where there is room for 45 cars. The office floors are arranged with access on two ends, at both ends of the corridor are stair-wells and lifts. The building is so placed that the front elevation faces south-southwest and the rear elevation faces east-northeast.

The vertical sunshades installed along the front of all 7 upper floors of the main building give the structure its unique architectural character. They are adjustable to all angles. Depending on how the individual blades are turned, the entire elevation has the effect of an abstract painting.

The general architectural impression of the building is one of great simplicity and clarity. The three elevations with windows are clearly differentiated in keeping with the direction in which they face.

The entire building conveys the effect of elegant precision that we associate with the typewriters and computing machines made by the proprietor. It is a new example of the countless possibilities of finding novel architectural and technical solutions to construction problems with new materials. The building is constructed along the most clean-cut lines and is a gleaming expression of the very highest accuracy and precision, an example of the fact that the trend of modern architecture is away from craftsmanship and towards construction out of prefabricated elements machined down to millimeter accuracy. A straight line of development runs from the buildings of Prouvé, by way of the office building point houses of Skidmore Merrill, Owens assembled from prefabricated parts (Leverhouse, Manufacturers Trust Company and the Alcoa Building) up to the creations of Mies van der Rohe, and to our example, the Olivetti Building.

Point-house «Beehive Passage» Frankfurt o. M. (pages 17-19)

The present point-house stands on the site of the old Konstabler Guardhouse. The reconstruction of the town and the resulting increase of traffic on the Zeil led the Savings Bank to build an office and business house containing its own branch. The building is a reinforced concrete skeleton-frame construction with wind-screens formed by the reinforced concrete walls of the staircase and lift shafts.

Each three window areas form one unit which is loosely joined to the next window unit.

New construction of the Bank of Hamburg of 1861, Hamburg (pages 20-21)

The problem consisted in closing a gap at the corner of Alstertor and Raboisen, the main street connecting Mönckebergstrasse and the Ballindamm.

The corner entrance to the counter hall has all the publicity value which the bank requires for this complex.

Interior: The bank, as proprietor, wanted the safe-rooms in the cellar, the counter hall on the ground-floor, the credit department, book-keeping, managers' offices, etc., on the 1st floor, while all the other floors were to be let individually as offices.

Steel construction with reinforced concrete ceilings and floating attics.

Federal Accounting Office, Frankfurt o. M. (pages 22-23)

When the whole project was first conceived and then worked out in detail, special consideration had to be given from a town-planning point of view to the surroundings of the Paul's Church and Townhall and to the earlier project of a spacious east-west thoroughfare. This very exacting position as well as the importance of the building as the Federal Accounting Office had to be expressed in the general conception of the complex.

The whole complex was constructed as a system of reinforced concrete skeletons.

All concrete parts, i. e. supports, frames and ceiling profiles, are executed in untreated concrete.

Cinema in Mannheim (pages 24-26)

In a residential area which has sprung up on the outskirts of Mannheim since the end of the war and which now has a population of 12 000 as against 6000 before the war, the problem arose of creating a civic center with public buildings.

The first project to be realized was that of a cinema with 600 seats. It was placed alongside an air-raid bunker, and its exposed, hall-like shape necessitated the architectural treatment of its exterior.

Adjoining the entrance hall with its boldly projecting slab (Platte) a single-storey administration building has been planned, but that part of the project has not yet been realized.

The cinema was opened in August 1954 after 5 months' work and cost with all its installations 420 000 DM.

Children's playing area Berlin-Britz (page 27)

A new type of childrens' playground was constructed in the Gehag Settlement, Berlin-Britz, Buchowerkchaussee. The boundary walls and «Pat-a-cake» platform are of reinforced concrete. Starting from the bottom, the Caparol colours of the individual concrete galleries are red, blue and yellow. The various playing areas within the boundary walls are arranged in tiers.

«Soolerbogen» Textiles Firm, Glarus (page 28)

The shop had to be organized so that it can be converted into a workshop for readymade articles at any time. For this reason all counters and shelves were mounted on «Aweso rails», which can at the same time carry assembly frames. As many as two window jambs were taken away from the old shop front so as to make room for a wider display window. The construction of a suspended wooden ceiling made possible the creation of a space for the iron supporting framework, the ventilation conduit and the lighting. For the lighting there was chosen a combination of neon tubing and lamps, which most closely resembles daylight.

One-family model house near Zurich (pages 33-34)

The house is entered on the level of the living-area floor, the bedrooms jutting out from the east face of the slope – below them lie the open hall (and garage) with a view over the lake. Next to the entrance is the kitchen as a sort of central room for the housewife, from

where she can overlook the entrance. On hot summer days the sliding wall between the large bedroom and the hall can be opened, as can also the sliding partition leading to the dining-room and the glass partition out to the garden.

Project for a settlement patio house (pages 35-36)

The set-back entrance on the north-side of house gives direct access to a hall at right angles to the house, with eating area and adjoining kitchen on one side and cloak-room, WC and cellar stairs on the other.

All the rooms are grouped around a square inner court-yard. The four walls surrounding the patio are fixed reinforced glass walls, except for one glass door in each.

On one side are the living and working-rooms, on the other the bedrooms with the bathroom between them.

A wintergarden glazed on two sides forms a link between these two wings, allowing even from the entrance a view across the patio into the garden proper.

The advantages of this patio house are: Very narrow lots. (Altogether about 400 square meters, including a garden of 13 x 13 meters, with resulting low costs of land and preparation).