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The Industrialization of Building in England

by Pierre Bussat

The most striking characteristic of contemporary British architecture is its "renovation" to meet the needs of a technological society. It was in the field of school construction that this phenomenon was first effectively revealed, owing to the stimulus of the general reform of education (Butler Act, 1944). Since 1945 England has spent 6 billions on her schools, where the number of pupils has increased by 2 millions. This is an immense effort, which could only be realized by the systematic extension of research, with architects exercising in the study groups an eminently co-ordinating function. Thus disciplined, architecture has nonetheless discovered new means of expression, in other than school buildings as well (housing and "new towns"). One word sums up this whole composite trend: articulation—which allows architecture to be the reflection of a technological and democratic society.

Methods and Aims of CLASP

by Michael John Keyte

The Consortium of Local Authorities Special Programme takes upon itself the rationalization of construction in England for new buildings representing an annual budget of 5 million pounds falling within the sphere of competence of the counties and boroughs of at least 50,000 inhabitants, of which CLASP assumes the responsibility of co-ordinating administration and research. This organization is mainly concerned with getting adopted homogeneous construction "systems" and with developing prefabrication as well as drawing on standard designs. Although given assignments that are, by definition, limited, CLASP, which has elaborated a method destined to become more general, can be considered as the pioneer of construction projects on a grand scale.

Research in the Construction Industry in England

A Building Research Station, established in Hertfordshire, is concerned with co-ordinating the three sectors of the building industry: planning, construction, production. It is subordinate to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, publishes a monthly Digest (40,000 copies), sets up exhibitions, makes documentary films, organizes conferences and works closely with all the instances having to do with the regulation and the rationalization of building.

Standardization and British Standards

by Bruce Martin

It is only in the 20th century that there have appeared bodies serving as central agencies for the regulation of designs and dimensions, i.e., standardization centres, with a view to facilitating continuous, economic production. Such a body is the *British Standards Institution*, composed of a hierarchy of committees; its norms, always established by free agreement and solely on the basis of their utility and the democratic consent of the interested parties, apply to objects, processes, concepts, dimensions, resistances and qualities, tests, Codes of Practices and, finally, terminology and symbols. Whereas old-style architecture comprised two stages, conception and construction, present-day architecture involves the intermediate phase of the manufacture of elements, building consisting essentially of assembling these elements. The two imperatives of the modern building, economic production and excellence of design, cannot be separated.

Modular Co-ordination

by Mark Hartland Thomas

With a view to a rational co-ordination of standard dimensions reducible to a common unit, known as the module, the Modular Society, a private, non-profit association, set up, beginning in 1958, a standard (or module) of 4 inches (about 10 cm.). Buildings entirely in conformity with this principle are already in existence. Moreover, the Society publishes a quarterly journal, "The Modular Quarterly", last summer's issue featuring the activities of the International Group for Dimensional and Modular Co-ordination, the purpose of which is to publicize the method throughout the world.

Laboratory for the British Standards Institution at Hemel-Hempstead

1958/59. Architects: B. Martin and D. J. Weate, London and Hertford

The dimensions of the elements and the grid unit of the plan both being based on the same fundamental module (4 in. = 10 cm.), co-ordination between the building project and the industrial production of standard elements has become possible.

Town and Country Planning in Post-war Britain

by A. Penfold and A. Travis

The few tentative reforms undertaken in the 19th century led to only sporadic successes. It was only the First World War, the great crisis of the Thirties and the emergency situation arising from the second world conflict that finally made imperative the adoption of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 and of the Agriculture Planning Act of the same year, a Planning Ministry having already been created in 1943. Henceforth, planning, for municipalities and regions, was obligatory. At first, immediately after the last war, it was taken over mainly by the State, then, in the present phase of high-level prosperity, the Conservative Party, after its return to power, entrusted most projects to private instances. The principal aims are as follows: the rationalization of urban expansion, with planning of green belts, the creation of new towns and, in less favoured regions, of new industrial centres, the decentralization of residential areas, and, in addition, the rationalization of agriculture, the latter to be achieved by means of sizeable subsidies intended to compensate the demographic disequilibrium (90% of the total population is urban). Contrary to the case in America, little attention has up to now been devoted to theoretical investigations, but on the other hand, practical projects are infinitely more numerous than in the U.S.A. However, research centres are gradually being set up, among other places at the Universities of London and Edinburgh, at the same time as the Society for the Promotion of Urban Renewal, the trade press, and the press at large are engaged in disseminating everywhere the conviction that planning depends on an exact analysis of the facts and not on fine-looking but more or less superficial projects.

English Sculpture since Moore

by J. P. Hodin

If the fact is borne in mind that since the Reformation in the 16th century and the rise of Puritanism, which unleashed an iconoclastic movement, England has for four centuries been cut off from the plastic tradition, the rebirth of her sculpture in the work of Henry Moore and of his disciples is all the more astonishing. Moore himself, Chadwick, K. Armitage, E. Paolazzi and many others have recently had international awards bestowed on them. All these sculptors fall into one of two groups: "classicists" or "romantics", both, if not ever original, at least unflinching inventive.

The Painter Francis Bacon

by Robert Melville

The art of the painter Francis Bacon, born in Dublin in 1910, could be taken as a fulfilment of Nietzsche's prophecy to the effect that there would come a time when man would be able to grasp only that which is humiliating. In any event, these paintings provide a foundation for conceiving a sense of the mystery of the human condition. Bacon proceeds systematically from already existing images—stills from films, the portrait of Pope Innocent the Tenth by Velasquez, the self-portrait of Van Gogh on the road to Tarascon—and in his works activates their invisible reserves of expressiveness. The autonomy of the brush stroke serves him as a means in this "interference". He employs this technique—influenced by the late works of Monet—to release the psychic content of the image he conjures up.

Commercial Art in Great Britain

by Kenneth Garland

Up until recently, the level of British commercial art was rather distressing. However, partly under the influence of American achievements in this field, there has been marked improvement, mainly, it is true, in prestige advertising alone. It can only be hoped that advertising agencies will gradually become more venturesome.—The works reproduced here stem from the younger generation, which seems happily to combine the inventive spirit of the Americans and the workmanlike respect for detail so typical of Swiss graphic art.