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FIVE ARCHITECTS AND ONE TRUTH

laden with delicately-made and tinted objects, of brilliant and costly fabrics. Such a contrast must be considered in judging a work so personal and intimate as this.

If architecture has already found the opportunity to manifest its tendencies within the old city limits of Paris, we can now hope that these limits will be altered and expanded in a rational manner. For, on 22 July, was passed a law supplementing the existing ones relating to the disposition of towns, the first of which group dates from 1919.

This law provided that all the large communities should prepare a plan for extension, arrangement and embellishment. Unfortunately the indifference of the individual organisms, and the opposition of special private interests, had not been foreseen, and, after three years of application, it had to be admitted that the law was ineffective. The new law provides the municipalities with no trifling powers.

It will be interesting to recount the principal features of this law. First of all, the law applies not only to cities of a certain magnitude, but even to the resort and holiday towns, and to those designated by the commissions of historic sites and monuments. As soon as plans have been

approved, the municipalities will be allowed fifteen years to lay out and build the new streets, even to the point of acquiring land upon which vested interests had proposed to erect buildings. As to territories situated outside the present city proper, this period is extended to thirty years. Finally, very severe restrictions are leveled at speculators, who up to the present time have been able to buy large tracts of land and sell them off in small plots, without even creating the necessary sewers, laying out streets or providing them with water.

This state of chaos will now be brought to a halt, for cancellation of sales can be obtained by the authorities if the sellers do not consent to submit to the conditions designed to secure the highest possible level of public sanitation. This law has been awaited with impatience by all town-planners, who now hope that their research efforts and propaganda is at last to achieve practical results. As far as Paris is involved in this question, there can be no doubt that all artists will join forces with the town-planners and the hygienists to ameliorate living conditions in the city, at the same time safeguarding all the beauties of the past and permitting new creative work to flourish.

G. F. Sebille.

Five Architects and One Truth

N THE profession of architecture, either in the United States or elsewhere, there are not many brightly shining marks. That is to say, outside the ranks of those who plan and design buildings, one would be hard put to find a citizen in any land who could name half a dozen modern buildings of distinction. If he did know such a group and also knew the names of the architects who designed them, the find would easily pass as miraculous. Yet within a period of ten weeks, Death swooped down and gathered in three American architects, whose names are known pretty well around the world, among their fellows. All of them have left achievements, and the work of two of them has affected and still is affecting the architecture of lands and peoples far removed from the Western hemisphere.

The first to go was Henry Bacon. Then there followed Louis Henri Sullivan. Last there went Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. By their deaths in so short a space they outstand as a trio. Not only that their works and their philosophies invite reflection and comparison, but that within the brief period of their lives there was being written in their land a chapter in the history of architecture the like of which has never before been known. In what form that chapter finally shall appear is for Time to determine, but into the writing of it Bacon, Sullivan and Goodhue played large parts and played them well.

Bacon is best known as the designer of the Lincoln Memorial at Washington, a building which is also the perfect expression of what he believed to be architecturally best. He worshipped at the shrine of the

Grecian tradition with a fervent and even passionate sincerity. He loved it, lived it, steeped himself in it, and into the building of the Lincoln Memorial he poured a lifetime of study and research. He knew, as everyone knew, that the Grecian architects had, by the slow process of trial and error, arrived at what they saw to be perfection. So they called it and so they left it. For them there was nothing further to be done in the temple form. Exquisite exactitude had been attained. Members and moduli had been established on a rhythmic base of mathematical accuracy. The horizontal spacing of columns was determined by the height of the shafts, but the height of the shafts was likewise determined by the spacing, since neither could exceed the proportion established by the lintel. A Greek temple could go no higher than the proportion of all parts fixed by the lintel that could be quarried and lifted into place. All had to give way to the inflexible rule of the just proportion, and the perfection of it has never been challenged. Even to the minutest detail, the inflexible rule applied, but behind all this seeking was no mere effort to arrive at a lazy rule-of-thumb method for the mass-production of perfect architecture. Behind it was absolute faith,—faith in the Universal Law of Number! A faith over which the controversy still faintly flickers and flames, now and then, but which staidly, silently and confidently, leaves the answer to the great cosmic flow of rhythm.

Here, in Greece, we may be certain, were no passionate pilgrims seeking to be original. Here were no vested professional interests pretending to produce art, as they called it, the while they messed up their com-

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munities with the stuff and nonsense that gapes from the street facades of any city in the New World. The Grecian architect sought perfection of form in a type of public building.

"The rivalry between Pythios and Hermogenes, who lived about a century apart, was a contest to discover the same thing-the most just proportions for a series of architectural parts of established shape in predetermined sequence of arrangement, in fact, the perfect norm for the century-old Ionic order as applied to the century-old plan of the peripteral temple. And these were great architects, the greatest perhaps among the Greeks of their age, not because they had done something new, but because they had done something very old a little better than anyone else had ever managed to do it. The Athena temple at Priene and the Artemis temple at Magnesia were claimants for one and the same title, that of the Ionic order par excellence; their size, their use, their location, their cost, were all minor considerations to this great distinction of being canonic, the perfection of their tribe and kind. In comparison with the differences which are apparent in any two Gothic cathedrals built within the same century A. D., these two Ionic temples would be undistinguishable one from the other. In this Ionic architecture of the Asia Minor coast we can obtain a very admirable notion of the extent to which individual preference and invention were encouraged or allowed to assert themselves.'

Professor Carpenter, in the delightful little book from which I have just quoted, also takes up the parallel of the perfection of the Doric order, which was that chosen by Bacon for the Lincoln Memorial. Whether the Doric temple form was permissible in building a memorial to Abraham Lincoln, or whether there was demanded something fresh, original, wrought out of the fibre and sinew of the man himself and of his life and time, was a question that evoked a great and at times a bitter controversy. But Bacon's faith was so honest, so simple, so straightforward, that no one could challenge his sincerity. It was strongly supported by the fact that the classical tradition had already been established for the public buildings of Washington,—a tradition laid down and still stoutly adhered to by the Commission of Fine Arts,-and now the Lincoln Memorial stands by the Potomac, and the honors have been heaped high on the architect who sponsored it. Yet it is certain that Henry Bacon would have been the very first to share his joy with the masters who inspired his parti, nourished his faith, and encouraged his unceasing study of that form in architecture which he accepted as pure and thereby perfect.

Louis Henri Sullivan stood as the utter denial of all of these things. He would have yielded to no one in his admiration of the purity and the beauty of the Greek architectural form as related to the time and the life of those who had evolved it. But to him the use of this form, and worse still, of the members that composed it,—as for instance, when architects borrowed columns for decorative purposes where no structural factor needed their service,—was not only the most barefaced thievery and deceit, but a confession that architecture had come to an end long ago. His philo-

sophy went even further. It went to the uttermost limit, denying the past completely, except as a source of inspiration, a whip and spur to put the modern architect on his mettle, that he, too, might arrive at a perfection of form born out of the needs and the life of his own time. "Form follows function," was the pith of his message, and in the draughting-rooms of many an academic office, where archæological wares were being dished up out of books and palmed off as art and architecture, his words fell like rain upon a parched earth. The message came out of the blue like a flash of light. Architecture was not a dead art, but a living one! The proprietors of the vested interests in styles, of which architectural practice is as full as is any form of capitalized property, took umbrage and alarm. But this is one of the little worms in the bud of art that is too often overlooked. The connection between the pocket and a profession of æsthetic philosophy is lost to sight, or deftly concealed, and thus a natural and perfectly understandable proprietary interest is allowed to masquerade as holy emotion.

But many of the youth of Louis Sullivan's day were, it seems, secretly rebellious. At least they were so in the middle and far West, where they answered, when taunted, that "traditions, established order in art, and beauty by dictum" had not lichened and mossed their minds into deferential docility. They believed in Louis Sullivan. No such message, they said, ever had come out of the humdrum environment in which men, all over the country, plodded away at their studies in styles and orders. To build a building they began by choosing a style, and then the owner got what he could out of it. If he lacked light, it was because the style demanded a fenestration which permitted but little light. If half of a library building had to be given over to a grand stairway, it was because the style demanded a grand stairway. Hardly more than a generation ago, such was the manner of producing architecture in It still prevails to some considerable America. degree.

To say that Louis Sullivan became the most powerful influence in American architecture would be vociferously challenged in many quarters. To utter the prediction that some day his philosophy will be recognized as the basis of all worth-while architecture in America, is not taking an inordinate risk. At heart he was at one with Pythios and Hermogenes. His philosophy had been evolved in one of the most remarkable educational experiences that ever befell a youth, and which he has himself told in "The Autobiography of an Idea." The influences that shaped this amazing mind stand as a complete refutation of all our modern theories of what we call education. Humbug and hypocrisy, out of which he saw architectural sham emerge, were his detestation and his horror. Stop! Halt! Wait! he cried out to the youth of his trade and day, and many listened and heard, and some wept

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and were heart-broken when the news of his death came to their still revering ears.

Today, in Northern Europe, where one may find the only old-world evidences of any modern architectural achievement,—in Norway and Sweden, Holland and Denmark, and remoter Finland, the name of Louis Sullivan stands high. Some primal directness of mind seems here to linger amid the wilderness of academicism and pedantry that flourishes pretty much over the rest of the Western world, and the lovers of architecture who long for something fresh, even as the tired business man sometimes longs for an old meadow with an elm tree and a brook, will thither turn their steps. There they will hear men speak well, and even in a praise so high as almost to be worship, of the Louis Sullivan that once proclaimed that architecture was a living art.

In the United States but few of his works remain. The Auditorium Hotel, in Chicago, is bound, so they say, for the scrap-heap, and with the present onrush of urban growth, another decade may have obliterated every trace of a building by Louis Sullivan. But it was this very onrush which blasted his hope, challenged his philosophy, denied his architectural conception. For in the boom of America, a new set of factors had arisen. They were as unperceived, at the time of Sullivan's resounding message, as the rate and direction of flow of what people called Democracy were guessed by even the least misguided of its hymners and chanters. These new factors were pecuniary in their nature. They had little or nothing to do with the technique of building. Form, in following function, even under the determined will and the mighty resources of Sullivan, soon had to reckon with them. In great architecture,-even in good architecture,-pecuniary factors and technical factors coincide. They flow along together, since what is rightly done is done at the least expense, in the end. But these two factors began widely to diverge under the impetus of the wild and disordered development of the natural resources of the United States, and with the advent of steel construction, which coincided with Sullivan's entrance into the practice of architecture, they were soon as far apart as the poles, and farther apart they are still going.

Under the necessity of finding some way of capitalizing the rising value of building sites in cities, as larger and larger crowds of people began to flow by these sites, buildings had to be pushed up. So long as their walls had to carry the floor loads, the height was limited. One finally reached a point in trying to design a high masonry building, at which the thickness of wall demanded in order to support itself and carry the floors left no space inside. The steel skeleton changed this like magic. Heights became almost limitless, and the era of the skyscraper came in like a blight. To Louis Sullivan it spelled opportunity. Form and function were to be married anew, and out of this

new union there must and should emerge an array of architectural progeny in such abundance, and such beauty, that none could ever again deny his creed,— "Architecture is an ever-living art!"

But the pecuniary factors soon dominated. The primary function of the great bulk of urban building became that of earning a return on the investment, either in the shape of a quick sale at a profit, or in rentals. It was all a kind of madness. The use of credit for speculation in building ran into complete anarchy. Louis Sullivan's dream of an ordered community, where the height of building scaled with width of street, and where men still saw the sun by day, and could even remember that there were stars at night, or a moon, drifted into the jungle of the subway, the traffic cop, and the electric light. Architecture, as the beneficent art, had no chance in this struggle, for architecture has to begin with a plan, and for the development of the United States there was never anything even faintly resembling a plan. There was only a scramble, and architects, even if they were the greatest of artists, cannot make architecture grow in the scrambled soil of financial anarchy. (This is in nowise intended to deny the achievements of American architecture, per se, but it is intended to point out the small proportion of good architecture to be seen, when one views the whole field of building, and to emphasize the truth that very little has been achieved in harmonious co-ordination and social relation or in offering any resistance to the creeping paralysis that is afflicting our arteries of traffic flow, as heights rise and volume of occupancy increases along those arteries.)

Slowly, tragically, and yet serenely, Louis Sullivan slipped out of the welter that could not ride over him. One of the great voices of any age ceased its protest. The spectacle of the reformers working up their evangelical ecstacies, offering their "Educational Embrocations," "Political Pills," or "Social Salves," was merely nauseating to a man who had uttered a truth. Architecture was, after all, but one of the parts of a greater whole, and the task of man had to be directed toward that whole. I quote from his Autobiography:

"The fabricating of a virile, a proud and kindly civilization, rich in its faith in man, is surely to constitute the absorbing interest of the coming generations. The chief business now is to pave the way for the child, that it may grow wholesome, proud and stalwart in its native powers. So doing, we shall uncover to our view the amazing world of instinct in the child, whence arises genius with its swift grasp of the real. The great creative art of upbuilding a chosen and stable civilization with its unique culture, implies orderly concentration of man's powers towards this sole end, consciously applied in each of his socially constructive activities in the clear light of his understanding that the actualities of good and evil are resident in man's choice—and not elsewhere. Thus will arise a new Morale in its might!

"And let it be well understood that such creative energy cannot arise from a welter of pallid abstractions as a soil, nor can it thrive within the tyranny of any cut and

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dried system of economics or politics. It must and will arise out of the heart, to be nurtured in common honesty by the intelligence, and by that sense of artistry which does not interfere with the growth of a living thing, but encourages it to seek and find its own befitting form. Thus the living idea of man, the free spirit, shall find its formimage in a civilization which shall set forth the highest craftsmanship, the artistry of living joyously in stable equilibrium."

Has any man ever offered human beings a message more moving than that,—"the artistry of living joyously in stable equilibrium"? How immeasurably it transcends the petty prattle of those who peddle their little nostrums in parrot-like refrain!

Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue died at the moment when his powers had begun to ripen into a noble maturity. His death leaves American architecture poor indeed, for while the number of his executed works is considerable, and their influence already a dominant one over those of the present-day youth who have escaped the blight of academicism even as was Louis Sullivan's influence dominant to the youth of a generation ago, the promise of his unexecuted work was far The genius of Goodhue grew slowly, but greater. with the barest exception, every work of his was a step forward. Like Sullivan, he possessed an exquisite feeling for line. Both were draughtsmen hors concours. But while Sullivan applied his marvelous hand to the demonstration of a giant conception of architecture, Goodhue drove directly at a mastery of detail. Perhaps it was by sheer force of circumstance, or perhaps it was because he was a mediævalist at heart, that he became for a period one of the foremost gothicists of his day. Some acclaim him as the greatest of all, but Goodhue knew that he still had much to learn from other masters. So far as gothic is concerned, he, himself, has said, that he would have been happy to have designed so beautiful a gothic building as Sir Gilbert Scott's cathedral at Liverpool, and the influence of that building upon much of his work is too pronounced to be missed.

Sullivan's philosophy was essentially an intellectual thing, if one may so state it, as compared with that of Goodhue, for his could have been stated only in the terms of creative instinct and craftsmanship working upon materials. Both abominated sham. Both were artists endowed with astonishing faculties for creating. Either might have reached the top in any field of art he chose to essay. Neither of them had suffered the educational process to put the blight on their minds or clip their wings. But while Sullivan hitched his wagon to a star and took the consequences, Goodhue set his gaze on the same star and never lost it to sight. Much he was spared by the slower ripening of his genius. Much Sullivan suffered because his own burst into full flower at an inopportune moment. The very didacticism of Sullivan's dictum took the edge off for Goodhue, for while he was traveling the identical road that

Sullivan had indicated, he wished to be free from any word-form that sounded like a limitation.

He was one with the craftsmen, or more properly with the artisan that was once an artist. Things had to be felt out and come at straightforwardly. There could be no architectural trickeries and pretenses. Buildings must be what they said they were. So said Sullivan, too, but he had wrapped his thought in words, whereas Goodhue would have embraced it joyfully had it been set forth symbolically in building after building. Perhaps that is the manner in which their differences may best be expressed, for even though Sullivan has left almost no architectural attainments behind, and although Goodhue has left, in my opinion, a host such as no other living architect can point to, there is something curiously intriguing in their lives. Sullivan proclaimed a truth, and under its flag he challenged the whole existing economic system, nothing less, as he later came to see.

"Of man's betrayal by man on a colossal scale he knew nothing and suspected nothing. . . . He believed that most people were honest and intelligent. How could he suspect the eminent?" I quote again from the Autobiography.

Goodhue lived his truth, from building to building, and happily, or not, he was hardly ever faced with problems essentially commercial in their nature. And yet he, too, was preparing his own challenge, just as surely as Sullivan had launched his. This is evident if one traces the periods of Goodhue's growth. They are so marked that they cannot be missed. Each emancipating influence is clearly discernible, and seldom, we may well believe, was Goodhue unaware of their appearance. In gothic he had gone to the top, when he went to Persia. He came back with a whole new alphabet of forms,-or, to put it as he would more likely have done, with a new bagful of symbolic substance. That was the beginning of the end of Goodhue as a worker formally in the gothic mode. Mexico came next and another strong influence asserted itself. Then the Oriental and the Spanish merged and a new era began.

Little by little all the old mastery of detailed ornament began to be transformed. Little by little he began to throw away ornament. One by one ribs and mouldings disappeared. Then it was that Goodhue began to realize his really fundamental philosophy. Then he began to play grandly with structure in the mass. He had come into his own not by a wholesale cleaning out of the architectural garret,—not by a sweeping rejection of the whole clutter and litter that had so long been offered as art, but by an orderly process of discriminating evaluation. True, in the end, he had cleared out the garret about as thoroughly as Sullivan did, but in the patience of the process he had likewise been able to test his powers. Men were afraid of Sullivan's empty garret and of the new stuff he was to put in it.

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Men were also afraid of Goodhue's process as well, for there were many vested interests stowed away in the architectural garret. The owners thought them inviolable in their dusty and cobwebbed security, and saw them thrown out with many a misgiving. But the commissions flowed in to Goodhue with an ever-increasing confidence, and over a period of two decades there came from his draughting-board a succession of creations, each one singing a lovelier song, or if not lovelier, then with a new and haunting cadenza.

In architectural circles his name began to be heard pretty often as the new Military Academy at West Point began to take shape. He was then a partner of the firm of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, as he was when the jury handed that firm the prize for designing St. Thomas's Church on Fifth Avenue. Then there came the first drawings, by himself, for the Baltimore Cathedral. Here was Goodhue playing with the gothic style, a good deal in the theatrical manner, with little romanticisms and dramatic trifles. In the Church of the Intercession, at New York, he began to see large scale detail and to let the brilliance of his draughtsmanship give way to the glory of sheer structure. In the Church of St. Vincent, also at New York, the influence of his visit to Scott's cathedral at Liverpool is clearly discernible, and it was then that the Baltimore Cathedral was completely redesigned. Something deep, something very fundamental, had occurred and pure draughtsmanship had been challenged by a clarion call. Then came the Chapel of the University of Chicago, and that, strictly speaking, was the end of the gothicist, although a host of smaller structures, many of which would have crowned an ordinary career, were designed during this time.

After the visit to Persia Goodhue did the house and gardens for Mr. Gillespie at Montecito, California, and the new beauty of these announced the new length of stride. In the Washington Hotel at Colon (Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson), mass begins to assume dominance. The concentration of ornament makes for large spaces and here also begins the use of colored tile. Then came the Exposition Buildings and Grounds at San Diego, California, of which the memory will forever haunt every visitor.

In the Town of Tyrone, New Mexico, which followed, there came an opportunity for massing and grouping, which Goodhue took to the full, and more ornament disappeared. Then came the house for Mr. Henry Dater, at Montecito, and that for Mr. Cappell at Pasadena, as well as his own little house, and the larger one, unbuilt, at Montecito.

Followed the buildings for the Throop Institute, now the California Institute of Technology at Pasadena, and the designs for Oahu College and the Kamameha School at Honolulu, and then there came the Marine Corps Base and the Naval Air Station at San Diego. The stride was growing, the pencil that once let itself

play with the joys of detail had become the tool of a man who no longer groped, but who marched confidently toward the light of a great vision. The Los Angeles Library and the Nebraska State Capitol, now in the building, were the forerunners, not of the gauntlet that Goodhue was to throw down, but of the faith that he was quietly weaving into an architectural guerdon. In the interim there came the Church of St. Bartholomew's at New York, where the parti was predetermined by the portico of the old church, which was to be taken down and set anew in Park Avenue. The original studies were Byzantine, in their motif, but these suited neither Goodhue nor the church authorities, and there finally was evolved an adaptation of the Romanesque, although always in the same playful manner in which Goodhue had worked in the gothic. His last finished building, opened but a few days after his death, was the Academy of Science at Washington, classical in all that the name implies, and yet devoid of that classicism which characterizes the Lincoln Memorial.

During these years, in which these buildings were designed, he gathered around him a group of brilliant young men,-young men who were in themselves creative artists, for he felt that in the practice of architecture no architect had a right to make draughtsmanship a job of sheer hack-work. He was more interested in the creative possibilities of a draughtsman than he was in a whole stack of magnificent drawings turned out as per order. Thus, as he became the inspirational center of his little group, he was able slowly to let slip the burden of detail. More and more he plunged into the study of pure structure, of mass, of sheer spaces made restful to tired and confused eyes, of decoration carefully concentrated to act as an undisturbing foil for the peace and quiet of great stretches of wall texture. Ever simpler and more simple were the forms he wrought, just as Pythios and Hermogenes, centuries ago and a century apart in their lives, plodded on towards the perfection of the Ionic order. Goodhue's was the harder task, one might say, for he had to deal with the accumulated mass of rubbish in the garret. He was far on his way toward an achievement which many of us believe would have attained to such heights as are seldom reached in any art, when, in April, only a few weeks after Bacon and Sullivan had gone, Death took him swiftly and without warning.

Great were the two Ionic seekers in Greece many centuries ago, and great have been the seekers of beauty everywhere and always; and if there be a spiritual Round Table where some common language brushes time and space aside, and where architects do meet, then I for one would ask nothing more enchanting than there to sit and listen to the flow of speech between Louis Sullivan and Bertram Goodhue, with Pythios, Hermogenes, and Henry Bacon sitting by.

C. H. W.