

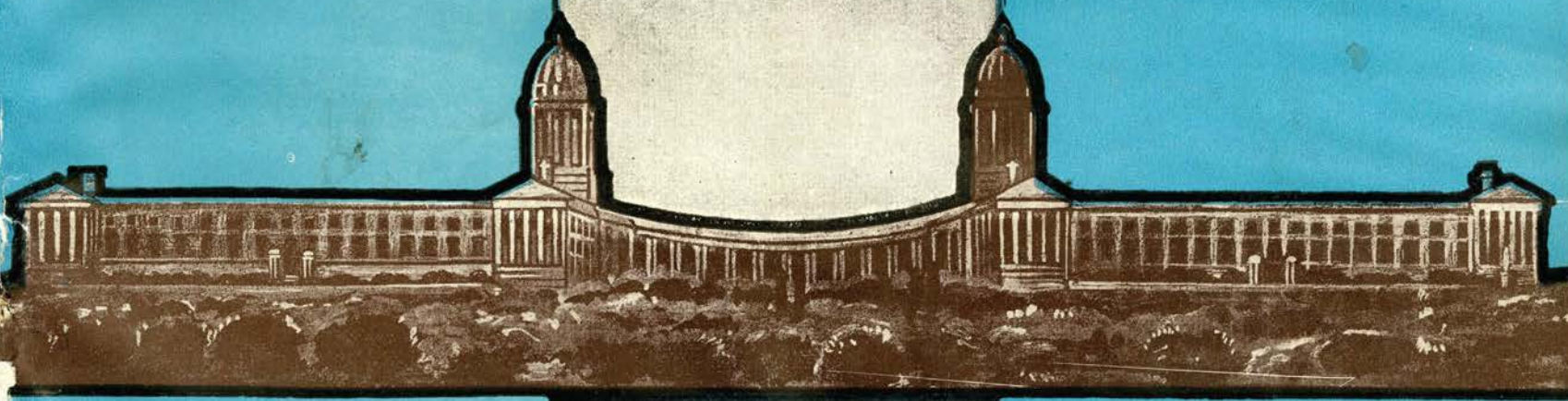
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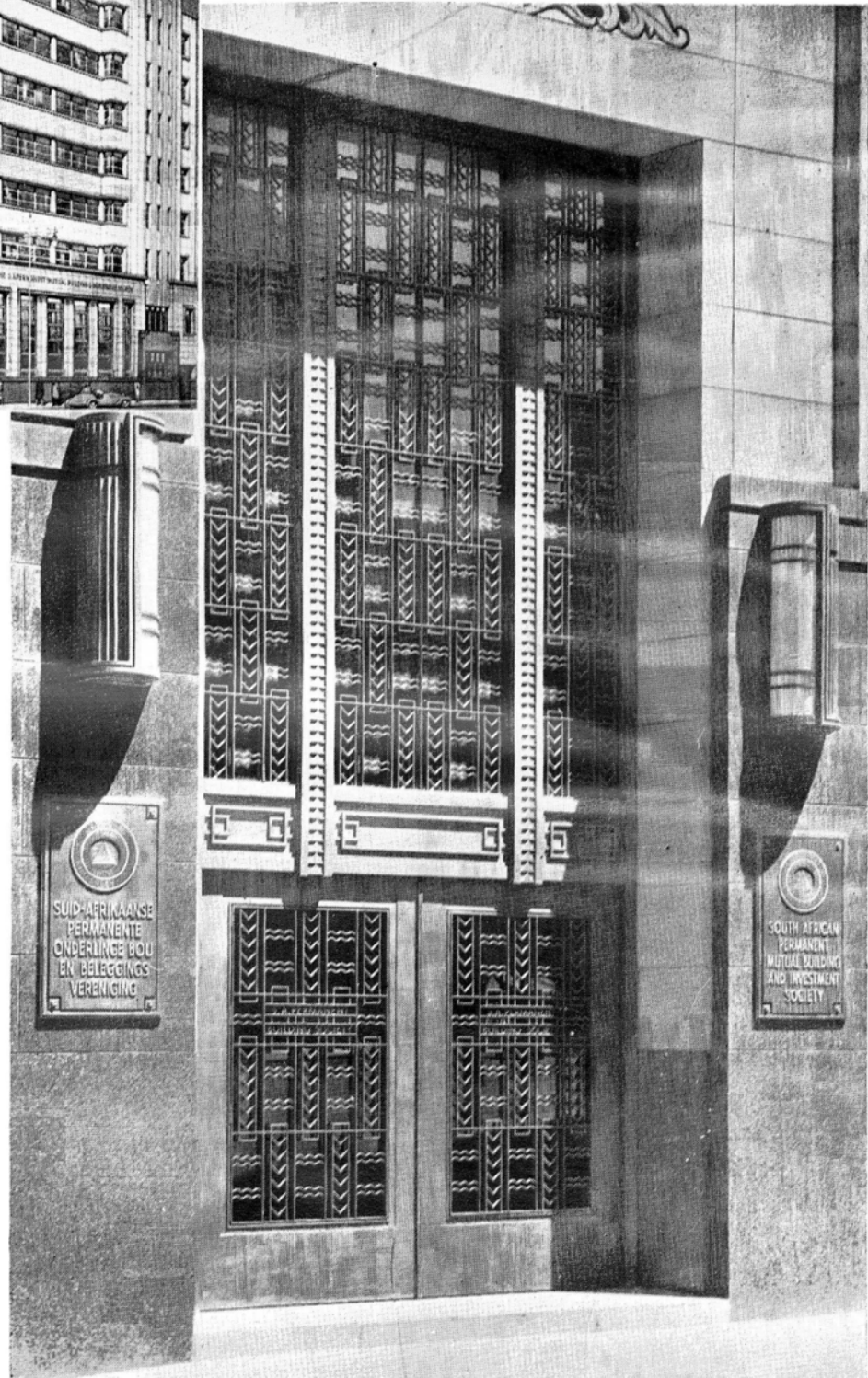
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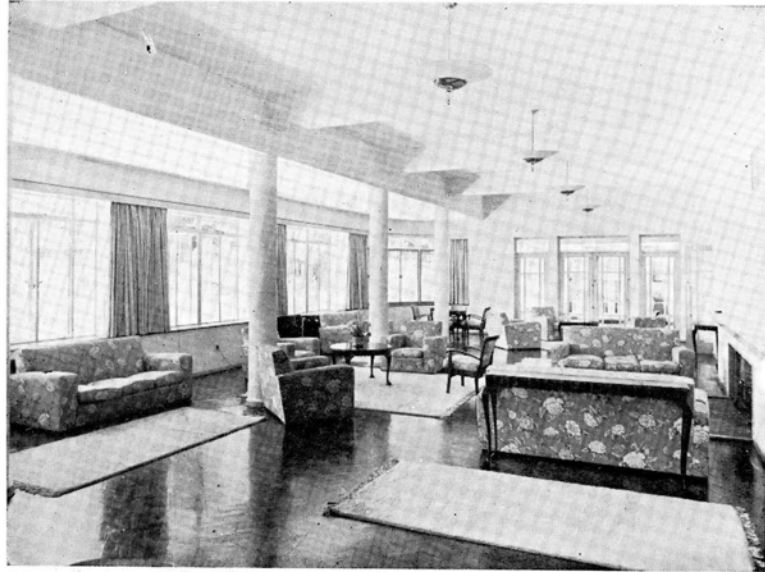
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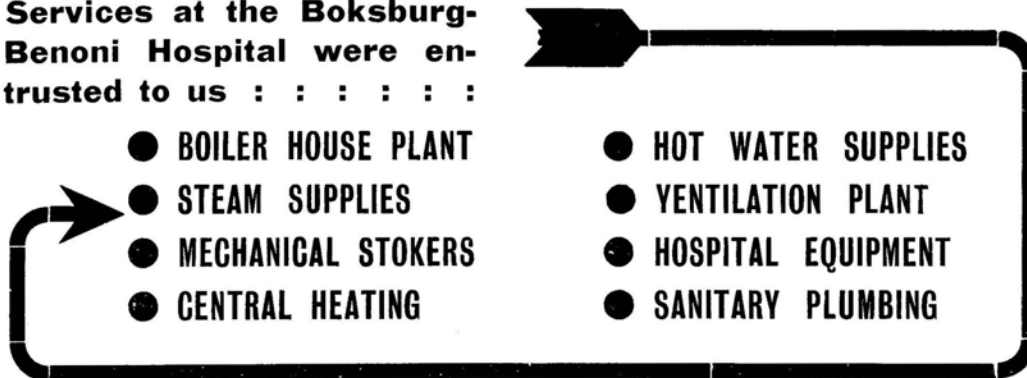
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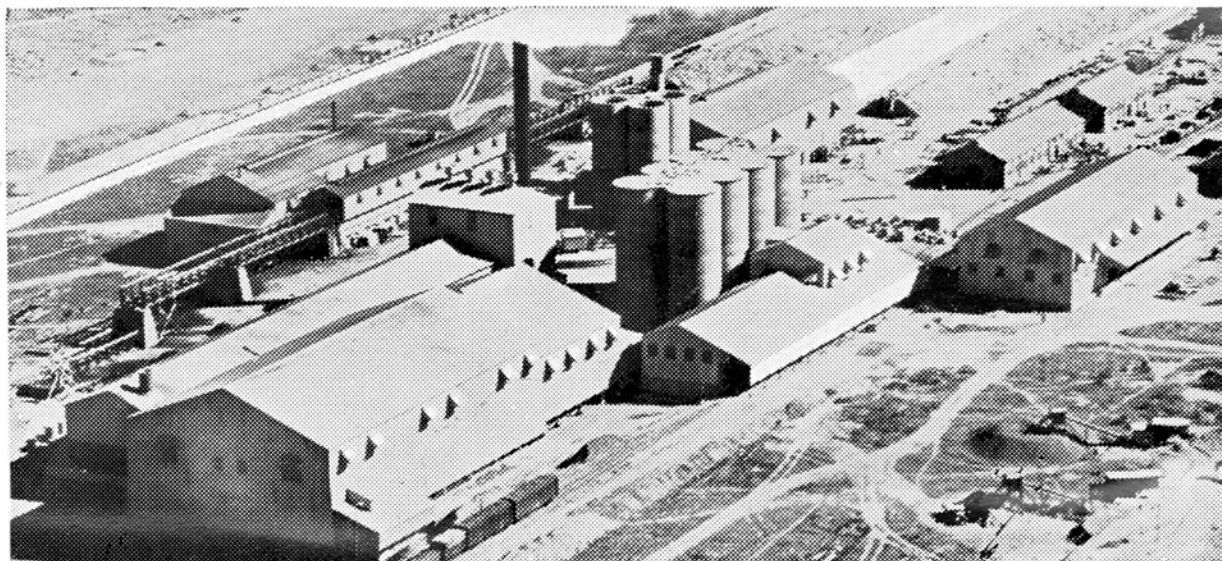
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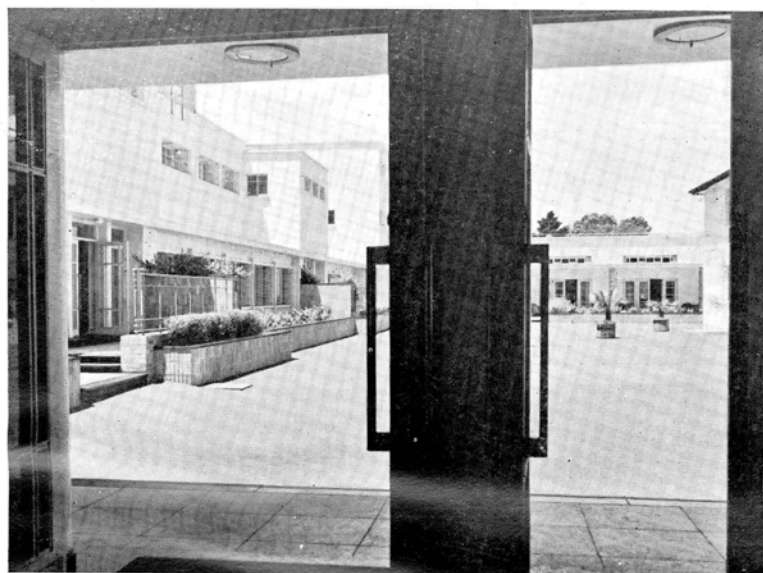
“PUBLIC WORKS OF SOUTH AFRICA,” which is published monthly, is intended to keep the public up-to-date in regard to projects of the Public Works Departments of South Africa, Union, Provincial and Local Government, giving expression to the activities of each of these departments of service.

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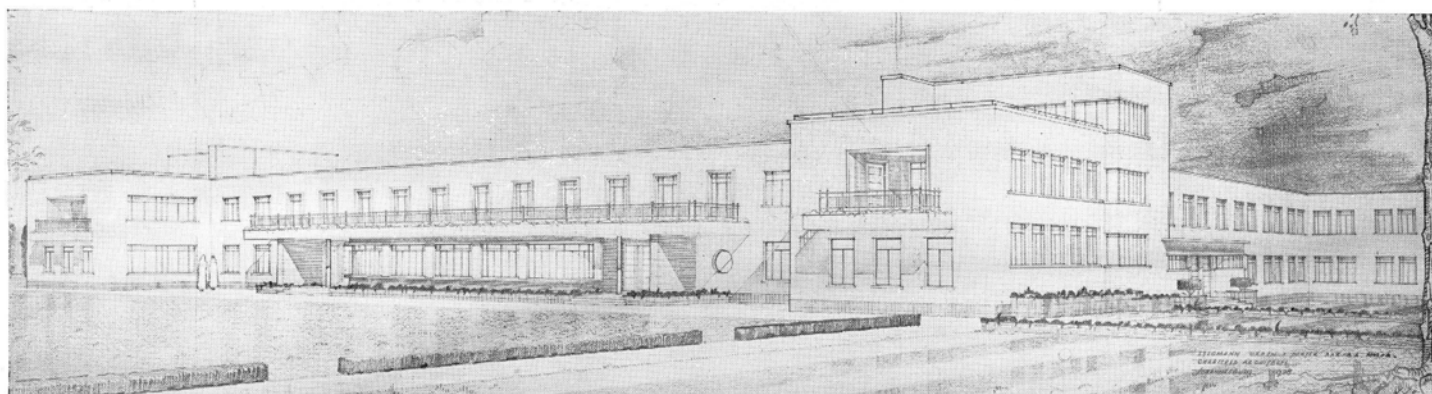
Nurses' Home



Inner Courtyard

THIS view of the inner courtyard, taken from the entrance hall of the new Nurses' Home, shows on the left the access to the corridor serving the sitting-rooms and, at the far end, the main dining hall and terrace.

The new building was planned around, and incorporated into, the double-storey sections of the previous structure, the remainder of which was demolished. That part of the building shown in the perspective below is new. The building has been planned so that a pleasant view may be had from all the rooms. The accommodation includes a spacious dining hall, sitting-rooms and a matron's and an assistant matron's flat, the latter three of which face north over a pleasant garden. The bed-rooms have been designed as bed sitting-rooms with built-in cupboards, writing desks and wardrobes, etc.



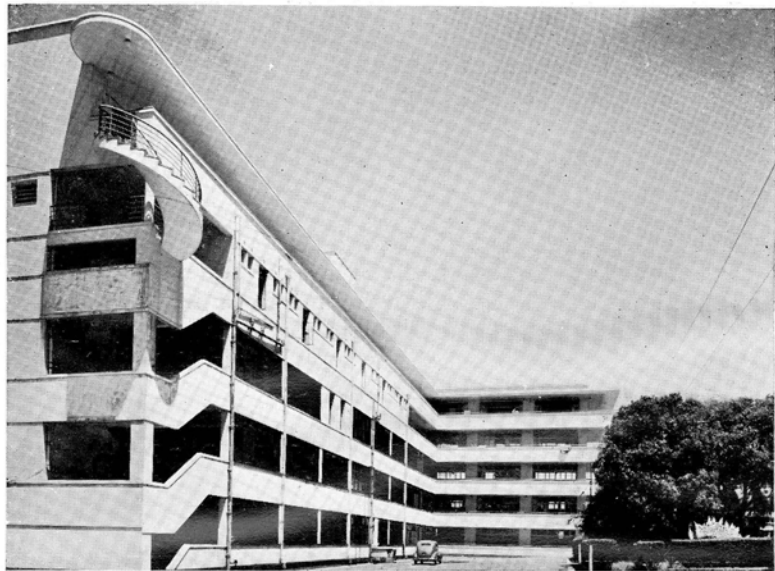
Probationers' Sitting-Room

SPACIOUSNESS is the rule in the new Nurses' Home. This beautiful sitting-room has a teak wood-block floor, and light cream-painted walls and joinery. At the far or east end, and at that from which this photograph was taken, double-swing glass-panelled doors open out on to an entrance palm court. In addition to this room, there is a sitting-room for sisters and one for nurses.



Completed Additions to Boksburg - Benoni Hospital Illustrated

★
THE north aspect of the European ward block showing at the far end the new north ward wing, distinguished by wide cantilever balconies. Note the additional floor, with slab concrete canopy over balcony, built on to the old ward block to accommodate the new children's wards.
 ★



WHEN the Boksburg-Benoni Hospital was founded in August, 1905, its buildings were ordinary brick and plaster structures roofed with corrugated iron, and its grounds were only eight morgen in extent. At that time it was partly a Government and partly a mines hospital, the East Rand Proprietary Mines Ltd., having contributed £7,500 towards the estimated cost of £30,000. Accommodation was limited to 70 patients, of which 40 were Europeans. At various times additions to its buildings were made. The original Native ward, a wood and iron shanty, was replaced by a building to accommodate 50 non-Euro-

pean patients, comprising 38 males and 12 females. During 1935, a new European surgical block was completed to accommodate 72 patients; and recently the grounds of the Hospital were extended by another four morgen.

Today, the Boksburg-Benoni Hospital ranks as one of the most important hospital institutions on the Reef. New buildings, and additions to the old, have been erected at a cost of approximately £200,000. These extensions and alterations have provided 100 new beds for European adults, 56 of the old beds being retained, 34 new beds for children and 158 new beds for Natives.



Children's Ward

★
THESE wards, for children, are on the top floor of the old European block. There are 10 single-cot wards for infants and four 6-cot wards for children. The wards are separated from each other and from the corridor by glazed partitions. The doors and the frames to the plate-glass partitions are of aluminium alloy. Each ward has large sliding glass-panelled doors opening out on to the balcony on the north side. The purpose of the glazed partitions is to facilitate supervision and to promote a bright atmosphere for the children. The walls have a "meloglaze" finish, and in the wards the floors are carried out in teak wood blocks. Rubber tiles have been used as a flooring medium in the corridor.
 ★

Extensions to the Hospital may be summarised as follows: To the European ward block there has been added another floor to accommodate the new children's ward. At the western end of the old block a new five-storey north wing has been built, accommodating on each floor an 18-bed ward divided into sections of 6 beds each, arranged on the "parallel bed" system. Each of these sections has sliding glass-panelled doors opening out on to the wide cantilever balconies. Directly linked with this wing, but extending south, is a new wing at present under construction. This wing will accommodate the administrative, out-patients', casualty and special departments as well as quarters for the residential medical officer. Future ward extensions will link up with this south wing on its west, and will comprise banks of 30-bed units, five floors high. This provision for the future will allow an ultimate capacity of between 600 and 700 European beds. On the north side of the European ward block a new Native Hospital has been built. It accommodates 158 new beds, in ward units of 36 beds each. A Native maternity floor has been included in this new block to accommodate 24 beds, a delivery room, sterilizing room, a room for immediate waiting cases, an operating theatre and a surgeon's wash-up, etc. In addition, there is an 8-bed self-contained maternity isolation unit.

It is intended that this new Native block will be used for females when a new ward block for Native males has been erected. The two blocks will then be linked together by an administrative section containing casualty, out-patients' and special departments, the whole forming a self-contained Native Hospital. It is intended to erect in the future a new ward block for Indians and Asiatics to replace the existing facilities. In addition to the Nurses' Home, described under the illustrations, the new buildings include a splendid Isolation Hospital, an up-to-the-minute block erected at the expense of the Public Health Authorities and the Transvaal Provincial Administration. The Boiler House and Service Block has been redesigned so as to allow gradual replacement of old plant by the most efficient modern boilers.

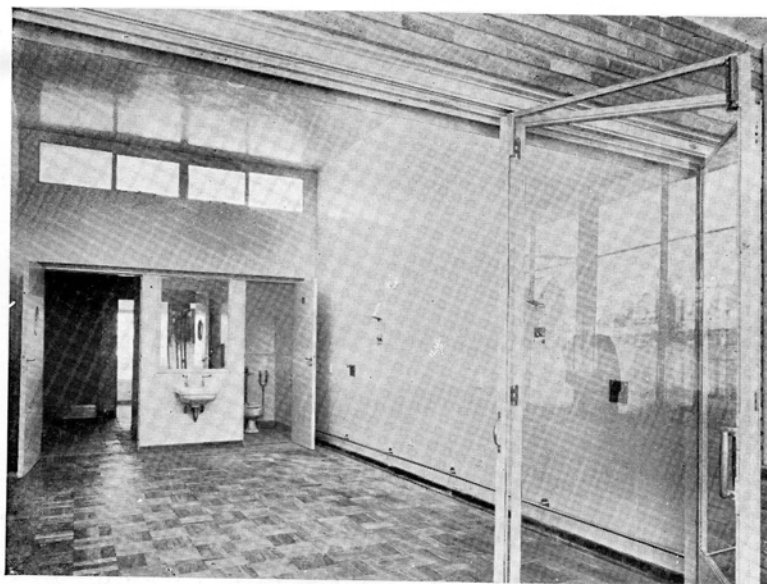
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The architects for the additions and new buildings for this hospital are Messrs. Stegmann, Orpen and Porter. Plumbing was carried out by Messrs. Dawson & Fraser, Pretoria. Frederick Bolton (Pty.), Ltd., Johannesburg, supplied furniture for the new Nurses' Home, and rubber flooring was supplied by The North British Rubber Co., S.A., Ltd., Johannesburg.



Isolation Hospital

A 2-BED ward in the new Isolation block. This photograph was taken from the open screened verandah. It shows the entrance lobby to the ward, the visitors' cubicle protected by a glass screen and the patients' w.c. Each bed has its own head light and silent call system, as well as telephone communication with the visitors' cubicle. Finishes to these wards include kejaat wood-block floors, coned kejaat skirting and satin chrome bed stop-rails. The walls and ceiling are finished with "meloglaze."



New Municipal Office Block Completed

at
Middelburg

An Example
Of Civic
Architecture
Attuned To
Rural
Surroundings



THE FIRST OF THREE GROUPS.

THE new municipal office block just completed at Middelburg, Transvaal, provides an interesting example of civic architecture attuned to rural surroundings. It is a building expressing its civic functions with a dignity which does not impose too heavily on its environment. In its design the architects have tried to express the purpose of the building in terms of a rural community; they have therefore avoided ostentation and pretentiousness which might have proved incongruous. The conception has been carried out on what might be termed a "rural scale," to which face-brick elevations are admirably suited. This scale has been further characterised or suggested by a restful slate roof, the use of bricks of a smaller size than is usual, and by having teak shutters to the windows.

The new office block is one of three groups of civic buildings comprising the entire scheme. This provides for the erection, at a later date, of a town hall to seat about 1,500 people and a supper-room with public library and reading-room on the first floor. It is hoped that the construction of the town hall and supper-room groups will begin in the near future, and plans have already been prepared. It must be pointed out, however, that the plans of these two future groups, reproduced here as a single unit with the municipal offices, are not necessarily final.

Prior to the erection of the new building, the municipal offices were accommodated in an old corrugated iron building which was one of the single officers' quarters purchased at the sale of the Cantonments on November 16, 1908. The contract for the new building was signed on April 9, 1940, and the foundation stone was laid during July of the same year by the then Mayor of Middelburg, Lieut.-Colonel A. J. B. van der Merwe. The building was officially opened on January 24 last by the Mayor and Mayoress of Middelburg, Mr. and Mrs. H. Laver. Although the selected tenderer's price was nearly £15,000, the completed accounts are expected to show a considerable reduction on this figure. With very few exceptions, South African materials have been used throughout the construction, and the furnishings were hand-made to the architects' design. The architects are Messrs. Hawke, McKinlay & Sayce.



Slum Clearance and Rehousing in South Africa

By . . .

JOSEPH HARDING



Some Aspects
Of A Problem With
Many Complications ::

SLUM clearance and the rehousing of the slum dweller is today a nation-wide activity, although unfortunately one which could be given a great deal more impetus. It is based on a growing awareness that no society can be stable or progressive, or even contented with its lot, when the deficiencies of its system cause thousands of people to dwell in a hideous environment of squalor. A bad conscience over slum conditions in certain areas of his city may not be a very real experience with the "man in the street;" nevertheless, it is a sign of the times that the materialism of the present age, whatever its effect upon our spiritual values, does make us ashamed of the blemish of the slum. Such feeling may not be very vocal, but so long as it exists progressive local authorities will be able, without opposition, to get on with the task of abolishing slums and building decent homes for the distressed poor.

South Africa is today growing unpleasantly aware that much has still to be done for the distressed poor of the country, particularly in the larger centres where the problem has hardly been scratched. In Johannesburg, for instance, it is estimated that another 3,000 houses will be required for the rehabilitation of European slum dwellers. Curiously, many of the smaller centres of the country are far ahead in the work of slum clearance and rehousing.

Following the Housing Act of 1920, the Act for the elimination of slums was passed in 1934. Although conferring almost dictatorial powers upon local authorities for slum clearance, this legislation, and the Housing Act, left the initiative for action with the local body. Many local authorities availed themselves of the powers and facilities of the legislation, others were slow to embark upon any set policy of rehabilitation and few, if any, have carried out such a policy to its logical conclusion.

It can be stated, however, that slum clearance and rehousing is being carried out to some degree in even the smallest centres of the Union. The largest centres, with bigger problems to tackle, lag behind only in the matter of proportionate effort. Up to December 31, 1939, the commitments of the Union Government for the provision of funds for slum clearance and rehousing totalled £20,128,000; and in the annual report for that year the Central Housing Board indicated that approximately another £9,000,000 for loan funds was needed.

Full information on the subject may be had from the successive annual reports of the Central Housing Board. However, as official reports do not always reach the public in full detail, the following article should serve a useful purpose by dealing with those factors, human and otherwise, which affect the problem. Slum clearance and rehousing is a very important activity of municipal government. It is, moreover, a peculiar subject on which much in general may be said as an introduction to a description of actual schemes, which we intend to publish later. For the benefit of those who are interested, a very brief summary of existing legislation is included in this article.

Initial Stages :

THE need for organised and systematic house building for persons living under a certain income level was recognised universally only after the last Great War. During the Great War, and for some time afterwards, house building for the less well-to-do was practically at a standstill, chiefly owing to the cost of building, the shortage of skilled labour and the lack of public confidence.

Worsening conditions of housing for both the poor and middle classes, however, forced the problem upon public attention; and in an attempt to satisfy the needs of the time the Government set about trying to kill two birds with one stone. In deference to the most vocal opinion of the time, it was felt that the building of houses should be left to private enterprise so that the laws of supply and demand would remain stable. Acquiescing in this, the Government did not set about alleviating the position by direct aid to those who could not afford to swell the demand for economic housing either by building or renting. Instead, a policy to establish the middle-class man was adopted. Money was provided only for economic housing schemes so that the middle-class man might establish himself as an owner. It was hoped that a "filtering up" process would solve the difficulties of the poorer classes who were expected to occupy the houses vacated by the middle-class man. By this process it was hoped that slum tenants would gradually move up from their slum quarters.

The "filtering up" process did have some effect; but it ignored two vitally important factors. These were, firstly, that large section of the population which could not afford to occupy even vacated premises and, secondly, the vacated premises of the middleclass man usually remained at a rental above the means of such people. Moreover, landlords were not always anxious to lease their premises to slum dwellers who could be expected to have little money and large families.

The "filtering up" process had another great fault. By no stretch of language could it be called a drive to establish housing accommodation for the poorer classes. It left everything to the initiative of the private individual who possessed, and was required to possess, limited means. As a result, the provisions of this policy left the slum dweller untouched and without hope.

PERSISTENCE OF SLUMS.

But even had this process succeeded in providing better accommodation for the slum dweller, it would have failed to eliminate slum conditions. In the first place, slum properties vacated by Europeans assuredly would have been occupied by non-Europeans and Natives. Secondly, it was a policy which failed to take into account the fact that large numbers of slum dwellers moving into a better environment may be expected to reduce that environment.

The slum dweller, born and reared in an environment of squalor, cannot be expected to manifest suddenly all the virtues of progressiveness merely because

he is allowed to live in a better house. Many such families do improve to a remarkable degree, but with the majority their income remains the same while, as a matter of course, the family increases. For such people something more than better accommodation is required, and that "something more" is essential if slum conditions are to be prevented from recurring. Heartless as it may seem, poor families with large numbers of badly clad and badly educated children soon reduce the standard of a neighbourhood. With falling rentals, landlords skimp on maintenance, and soon the depressing aspects of poverty become progressively visible, until the neighbourhood is not very far removed from the slum stage. In South Africa such neighbourhoods rapidly deteriorate because of the infiltration of non-Europeans, who take advantage of the low rentals and the irresponsibility of certain landlords.

This is one of the complications of the slum clearance problem in South Africa, where experience has shown that for effective action slum areas should be removed *en bloc*. Former slum inhabitants must be transplanted to new habitations where the most progressive families may realise further advancement and set an example to the more backward, and where the latter may be subjected to an indirect discipline imposed through some system of management. Slum conditions are the most persistent degradation on the face of the earth. Unless a slum area is cleared away entirely, that part of it which remains soon exerts a malevolent influence on its surroundings.

South Africa has long since abandoned the policy of backing the middle-class man only: it is now universally recognised that housing for the poorer classes is a responsibility for the authorities. In the years following the Great War housing conditions in this country were reduced to such a desperate state that public opinion forced the Government into a policy of subsidising house building. This resulted in the passing of the Elimination of Slums Act No. 53 of 1934.

Site Selection and Control :

THE problem of slum clearance and sub-economic rehousing in South Africa is complicated to an enormous degree by the character of our slums. Invariably the slums of this country comprise hideous areas in which distressed Europeans live, with non-European and Native neighbours, in an environment of mutual degradation. Slum elimination, therefore, has to be tackled in a threefold manner. It is not only a matter of rehabilitating distressed Europeans. This is only one quarter of the problem. Rehousing in some form or another must be embarked upon for the non-Europeans and Natives as well.

Naturally, each scheme has its own specific problems. Sometimes, when a slum area is cleared, the site is reoccupied by a properly planned housing scheme. Frequently, sub-economic housing schemes are carried out on virgin ground in close proximity to areas of employment, so that those who work nearby may be lifted out of any slum area which may have to await

clearance until the non-European and Native inhabitants have been provided for. Although, in terms of the Act, money can be borrowed from the Government only for the purposes of slum clearance and rehousing, it is not necessary that a site cleared of slums be occupied by the projected scheme. In Johannesburg, for instance, certain sites originally occupied by slums have been given over for industrial development, the evacuated inhabitants being provided for in other areas.

The racial aspects of the problem constitute the greatest difficulty in this country. Native inhabitants of slum areas cause little difficulty, because they may be removed easily to their own locations or townships. Once removed, their contribution to the problem practically ceases to exist. It is different with the non-European or Coloured person. This section of our population cannot be classed with the Native; and there is at present no legislation which can prohibit Coloured persons from residing in areas inhabited by Europeans. It must be remembered that, unlike the Native, the Coloured population of South Africa is not strictly definable. There are so many persons who are difficult to classify either as Europeans or Coloureds. Although society may have little difficulty in making distinctions, no distinctions can be made by the authorities in the application of legislation where none are entertained by law.

SAFEGUARDING BOUNDARIES.

So far as rehousing is concerned, tenancy is controlled very easily by selection. The difficulty is rather with the control of areas. When an area has been cleared of slums, there is nothing to prevent Coloured persons from settling in other neighbourhoods wherever they may find landlords willing to lease property to them. In this way the clearance of slums from one area may set another area on the downward trend. Such a trend is hastened not only by the colour prejudice, which causes immediate depreciation in adjoining property, but also by the fact that many of the Coloured families evacuated from slum areas are of the type which may be regarded as beyond rehabilitation. Such families may earn their living, for example, by illicit liquor dealing; consequently, they refuse to be enticed away to any area or township set aside for them. As no legal form of compulsion exists, areas infected with such persons can be cleared gradually only by pressure through the Public Health Department or by police action in cleaning up the illicit trade.

It will be seen from the foregoing that, in carrying out any sub-economic housing scheme, careful attention must be given not only to the selection of suitable tenants but also to the selection and arrangement of the site.

One of the first safeguards which must be applied to any such housing scheme, in the case of one that is on a site previously occupied by slums, is to ensure that the area will not allow slum conditions to develop in its immediate environment. This can be achieved by a careful arrangement of the

boundaries of the scheme. An interesting example of this is provided by the Maurice Freeman Township, Johannesburg.

Prior to the erection of this sub-economic township, the site formed, in an area of medium respectability, an island of hideous slum conditions reputed to be the worst den of vice, filth and overcrowding in Johannesburg. When this slum was cleared the Johannesburg City Council was careful to take over for rehousing purposes an area which extended to what may be called the boundary of respectability. That is to say, on the fringe of the former slum area all those properties which, though not actually slums, were considered likely to deteriorate or be affected by an infiltration of Coloured persons were taken in. Be it noted that the mere structural condition of such houses is not the only criterion. Some of the houses which have been left on the fringe of the township are poor brick places; but they are decently kept by European owner-occupiers, and could not be regarded as slum properties. Vacant stands adjacent to factory premises in the immediate vicinity were taken over for the erection of communal buildings, and a considerable area of the reclaimed ground which was not suitable for building purposes was made available for an extension of the Ellis Park sport facilities. In this way it has been possible for the Council to block up any loopholes through which ugly conditions could intrude on the Township. Playing grounds and garden areas are also effective for this purpose, and can be made to serve as pleasant screens.

Social Aspects :

ONE of the essentials of any sub-economic housing scheme is that it should form a basis for the social rehabilitation of tenants who were slum dwellers previously. Such persons, who form the majority of the distressed poor of any town, have lived miserable lives narrowly circumscribed by the barricades of hideous slum conditions; opportunity for advancement rarely, if at all, visited them and self-respect, the foundation of progressiveness, proved impossible to them. Slum conditions are a narcotic to all those human qualities which are accounted of value to society. Adults may recognise their distressing circumstances, but pride and self-respect, strangled by hopelessness, give way to resignation. How much more deadly then must be the effect of slum conditions on children born and reared as slum dwellers?

When such people are transplanted into a clean and respectable environment, such as that provided by a municipal housing scheme, few can be expected to drop their former method of living or outlook on life without difficulty. Some families fall into their new destiny with ease, but other need guidance and sympathetic treatment.

This difficulty is met by employing a manageress to supervise the township. The position must be filled by a woman who not only understands their outlook on life and the problems confronting the tenants, but who is also able to adopt a correct psychological approach.

For instance, the manageress must visit all the houses in the township periodically to see whether cleanliness is being maintained, whether the property is being looked after and how the family is doing. She may also assist housewives by making suggestions on the arrangement of the household, meeting the budget, etc. These duties are not carried out as a routine inspection but rather as a friendly visit, during which such matters arise incidentally.

Another factor included in management is the method of paying rent. In Johannesburg's municipal townships the experience is that it is better for tenants to pay their rents at an office in the township rather than to have a house-to-house rent collection. This helps to inspire a feeling of independence, which is of great value in helping the former slum dweller to rehabilitation and a new outlook on life. When tenants fall in arrears with rent, the reason is ascertained. If it is a good reason the tenant is helped by being allowed to pay small instalments. If there is no reason the manageress shows a firm hand in dealing with such matters.

SUCCESS OF REHOUSING.

The success of the sub-economic housing schemes which have been set up in South Africa is undisputed. It has been found that the majority of families who had formerly abandoned themselves to hopelessness, rapidly donned the garb of self-respect. In their new homes they became house-proud, which, within reason, is a good thing, for it implies painstaking care in cleanliness, good order and method. The male members of such families found themselves respectable citizens, with the result that they could tackle their work with eagerness. They became stable, reliable workmen many of whom increased their earnings. The result has been such that, in Johannesburg at any rate, it has become an established practice for certain employers of unskilled labour to employ, whenever possible, the tenants of the municipal housing schemes at higher wages than normally.

* * *

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION.

Elimination of Slums Act:*

The Elimination of Slums Act No. 53 of 1934 placed upon local authorities the responsibility for dealing with slum clearance as well as ensuring the provision of adequate housing in its area. Its chief purpose was the removal of certain legislative deficiencies which previously hindered the work of slum elimination. Its more important provisions included the conferring of increased powers on local authorities for dealing with nuisances which are defined, establishing standards to prevent overcrowding, the laying down of effective and cheap methods of enforcing the evacuation of slum properties and empowering the local authorities to acquire for slum clearance purposes, either voluntarily or by expropriation, both land on which slum properties are situated or land adjacent thereto, the cost of which may be met out of loan funds under the Housing Act if the land is used as a site for carrying out a scheme of rehousing.

Scope of Housing Act:

Loans are made only through local authorities, the Act empowering these bodies to borrow money for the purpose of themselves constructing dwellings or lending to approved borrowers. The Act provides for the establishment of a housing loans fund in each Province, consisting of such moneys as Parliament may appropriate from time to time for these funds. Advances are made by the Treasury to the Provinces, who in turn re-issue the money to local authorities for making payments in respect of work completed or services rendered in the erection of dwellings and carrying out schemes. The Administrator is the approving authority for the granting of the loans, and the initiative is with the local authority to make application for an allotment for loan funds. The security for repayment of advances is all the revenues and assets of the local authority. Loans granted by a local authority to a society or individual have to be secured by a first mortgage over land and buildings thereon.

Amendments to Housing Act:

The local authority, with the consent of the Administrator and with the recommendation of the Central Housing Board, is empowered to borrow money at 4% interest either to carry out a scheme of housing itself or to advance money to approved persons not owning any house for the purpose of building a home. If a local authority undertakes a housing scheme itself it can borrow the whole of the money required for a long term of years up to a maximum of 50, though usually the maximum is fixed at 40 years. It can then let such houses to approved tenants, or it may sell such houses on the hire-purchase system. The authority is not allowed to profiteer on the amount charged for rent or for hire purchase.

If a local authority advances money to a private person to build, it can advance only up to 80% of the estimated cost of the house and land; and the period of loan may not exceed 20 years.

In 1937 the Additional Housing Act was passed, empowering the Government to advance money, subject to certain conditions, to approved building societies for the purpose of assisting persons to obtain a loan for the construction of a house.

* * *

In addition to this, the Government lends money to local authorities at $\frac{3}{4}$ % interest for the erection of sub-economic houses for people who cannot pay an economic rental. Local authorities are able to borrow money at 1s. per cent. interest to build houses for the aged poor and totally unfit.

In certain centres utility companies are able to obtain money, under the Housing Act, from local authority for economic housing, sub-economic housing, the provision of hostel accommodation for lowly paid employees and housing for the aged poor and totally unfit. These facilities are subject to certain conditions which need not be detailed here.

NEW CHILD'S ART CENTRE AT PRETORIA

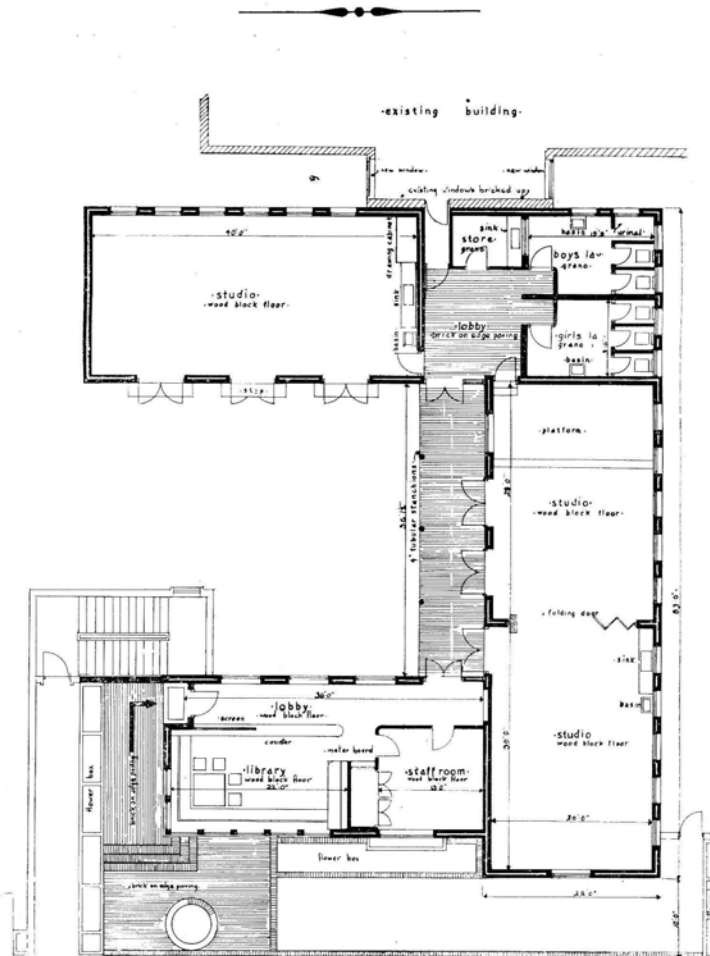
By constant exercise of self-expression the child not only becomes more proficient and better able to clarify its mental images, but gradually and progressively seeks for more material; consequently it learns at the same time to observe with greater accuracy and to remember increasing detail.

*An Institution For
The Development Of Self-
Expression Through The
Medium Of Art*

THE erection in Pretoria of a new building to accommodate the Child's Art Centre throws an interesting light on an educational function which began as an experiment three years ago. Today the Art Centre runs in conjunction with all the Pretoria schools, totalling nearly 40, and has an attendance of about 600 pupils. The principal is Miss B. L. Shaw.

The Centre was opened in Pretoria during March, 1938, under the auspices of the Carnegie Co-Operation of New York. It is supported by grants from the

Pretoria Municipality, and the rent for its premises is paid by the Transvaal Education Department. Construction on the new building should be completed early in March, when the Art Centre will move from its existing premises in the Gymnasium School Buildings. For these new premises the Centre is indebted to Mr. J. Downie, of Messrs. Clark & Downie (Pty.) Ltd., building contractors, Pretoria. Mr. Downie has borne the cost of erection and is leasing the premises to the Centre at a merely nominal rental. The architect is Mr. Norman Eaton.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

Education Through Self-Expression

CONTRARY to what may be expected, the Art Centre is not, strictly speaking, an art school. It is more accurately described as an institution in which, through the medium of art, self-expression is encouraged and developed under sympathetic supervision. The children attending are all of a receptive age, ranging from 3 to 15 years.

Underlying the purpose of the Centre is the idea that effective education is impossible without the development of the powers of observation, mental retentiveness and self-expression. The capacity to learn is wholly dependent upon the memory aided by the power of observation. Conversely, without the power of self-expression education would be labour wasted. It is the purpose of the Centre, therefore, to develop in children of receptive years the power of self-expression.

The method adopted to achieve this has all the attributes of novelty. No coercion whatever is imposed upon the child, who is left to express itself to whatever degree it is capable. By this constant exercise, the child not only becomes more proficient and better able to clarify its mental images, but gradually and progressively seeks for more material; consequently it learns at the same time to observe with greater accuracy and to remember increasing detail.

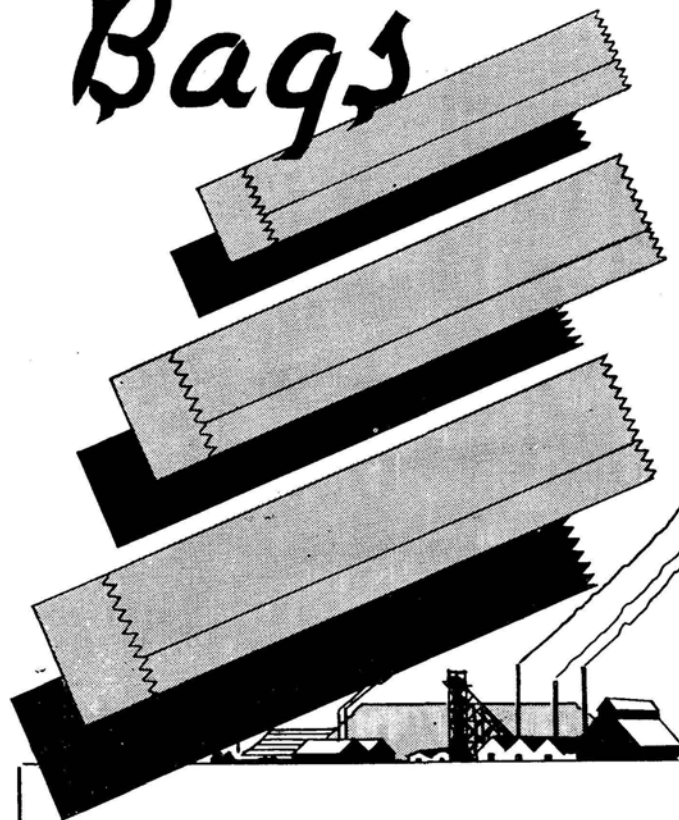
It is no accident that art has been chosen as the medium for the development of self-expression. Mental images which form the basis of memory are, for the most part, of a visual nature. The simplest method to strengthen these visual conceptions, and so clarify them, is to reproduce them as drawings. This process discovers where the image is faint and nebulous, its practice enables the mind to focus on greater detail; and thereby two things are achieved. Firstly, the powers of observation and mental retentiveness are strengthened, and, secondly, the power of self-expression becomes more effective.

At a very early age children form conceptions and retain impressions of what they see around them. These conceptions and impressions vary in completeness according to the age and mental development of the child, and when reproduced in drawings, reflect the degree to which the child is capable of recognising essentials. Actual drawing ability is of secondary importance. Thus, at the Art Centre, the children are encouraged to draw what they like and how they like. The mistress in charge may help them by giving hints or making suggestions, but no attempt is made to teach the children how to draw unless information is asked for.

To encourage observation and to provide them with subjects, visits to the interesting places of the city are made. The children then set about depicting what they have seen according to their own impressions. Another essential is that the children should work in congenial surroundings. The value of the system is apparent when it is realised that many children have natural talents which are frequently stilted or even discouraged by conditions in the home, where they may be teased or laughed out of any serious attempts by other members of the family. It must be emphasised, however, that the discovery of talent is not the primary function

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of the centre, but its activities do serve to enable the children to discover whether their talents lie in art or not.

The results which have already been achieved at the Art Centre are a valuable testimony to the efficacy of the system. Examples of the work performed each year by the children show steady improvement. The first efforts of many bear little resemblance to the objects they attempt to depict. Trees, for instance, are shown as little blobs of colour. It is not very long before the child, grown more practised in observation, strives to achieve more accurate outlines. Later a stage is reached when the child begins to realise that something essential is missing. The progress of development in the sense of perspective is very noticeable. This is the most important stage in the development of the child, for it at once reveals that the child has become dissatisfied with the make-believe world of matt outline drawing and begins to probe into the realities of the third dimension.

Much of the work performed by the pupils is quite creditable from an artistic point of view, and there are a number of examples which are extraordinarily good. Besides painting, the children may model in clay if they wish, or make masks. Their work is pinned on the walls in age groups so that any visitor may see the results achieved.

* * *

The New Building

THE new building is a double-storey structure carried out in light golden brown face-brick. It is on a site in Skinner Street, adjoining the Diocesan College building. The Art Centre is on the ground floor, the upper floor being given over to Government offices.

The plan, which is reproduced here, is essentially simple. There are two large studios in the Centre, the largest being in the west wing. This studio is 60 ft. long by 20 ft. wide, and is divided into two by a folding partition door. The south section of this studio is complete with platform. The studio in the south wing of the building is 40 ft. long by 20 ft. wide. Both studios have cross lighting and ventilation and large double-swing, glass-panel doors opening on to the inner courtyard. Each studio has its wash sink and basin. The walls have pinning boards above a face-brick dado 2 ft. 6 in. high. The windows are above the pinning boards.

The library in the north wing is 22 ft. long by 12 ft. wide, and is equipped with teak wall-seating. Wood-block flooring has been used throughout, except in the convenience blocks, where granolithic has been used.

As indicated by the arrow on the plan, entrance is effected through a lobby with large windows facing on to the inner courtyard. The entrance stoep has brick-on-edge paving. Flower-pocket walls and a low garden wall define the main elevation, which faces north.

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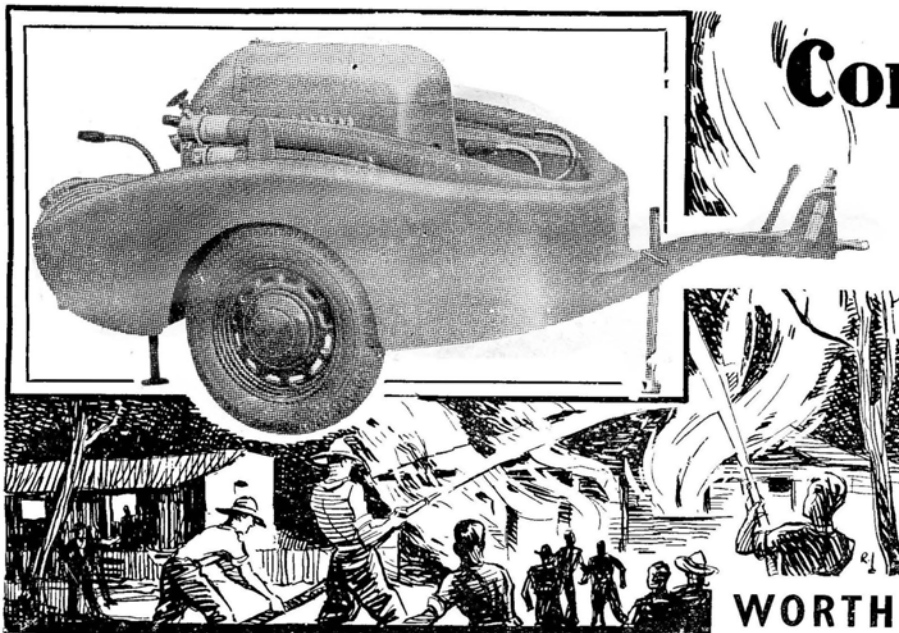
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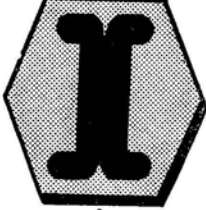
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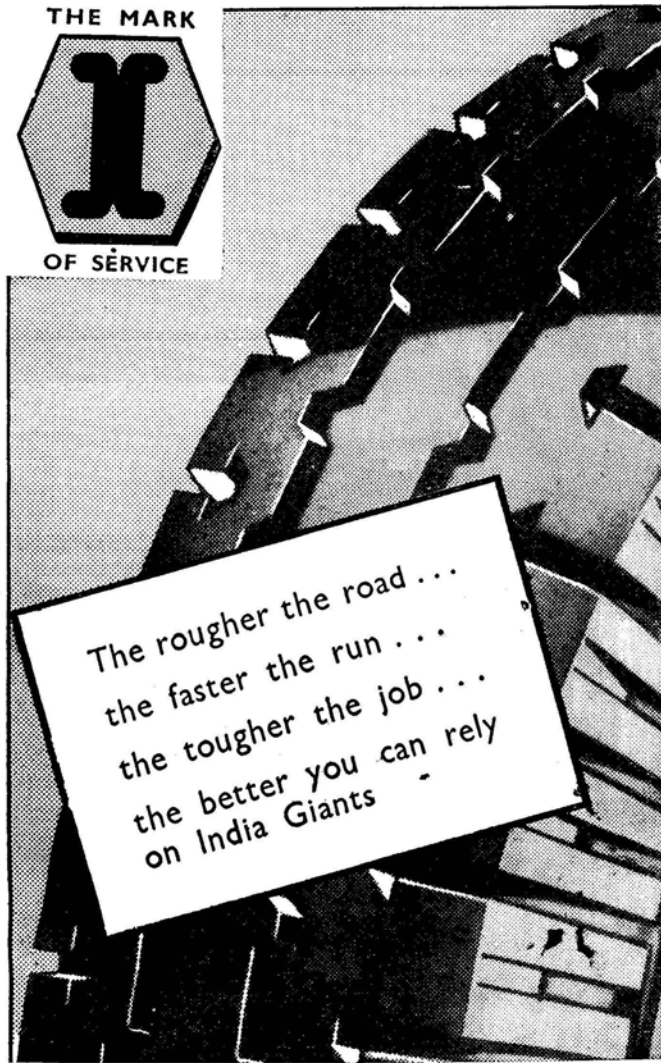
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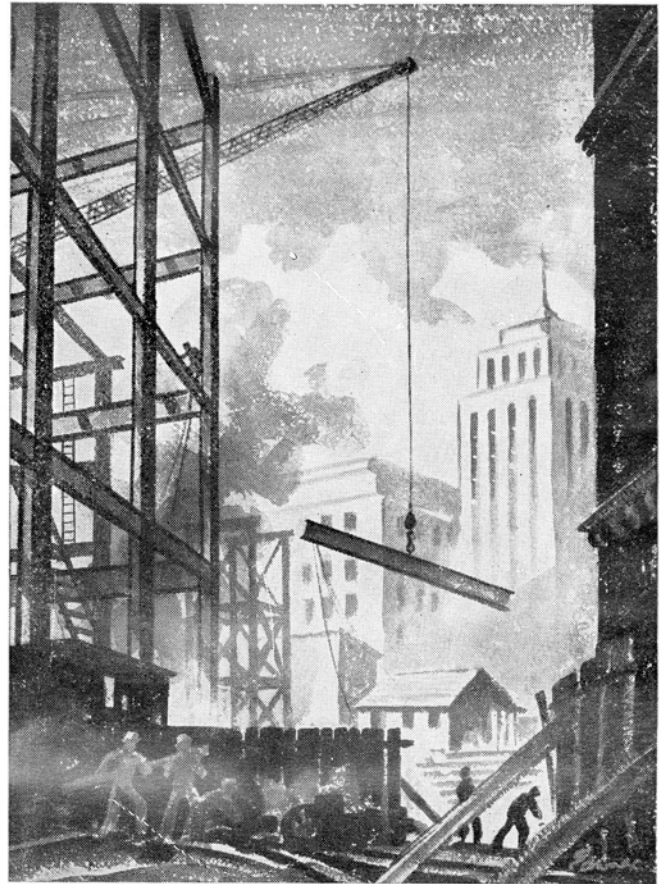
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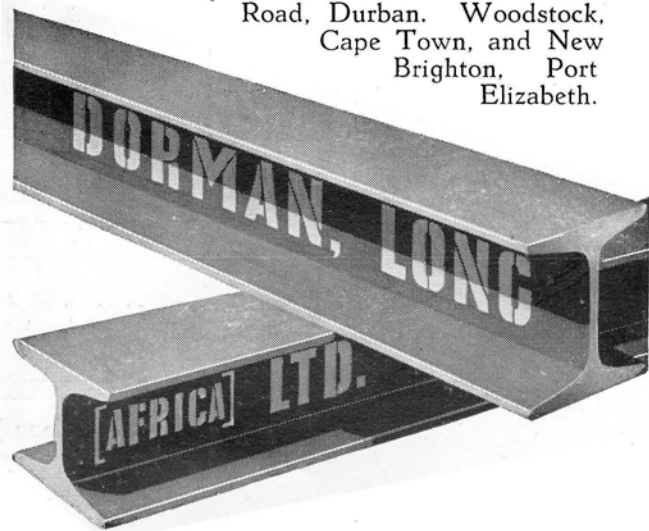
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