

Summary

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dise Mart⁴ fournit ici d'intéressantes indications. En 1943, la production de meubles en noyer s'élevait à 13 %; elle atteignait déjà 34 % en 1947. Au cours de cette même période, les meubles d'acajou avaient reculé de 20 % et, en 1947, ne formaient plus que le 26 % du total de la production. De même, l'ébène a baissé de 32 %. Aujourd'hui, les bois clairs comme le bouleau et le chêne blanc ont la préférence, suivant le goût croissant du public pour les meubles modernes. En 1948, les styles les plus demandés étaient, dans l'ordre: le „moderne“, le „conventionnel“ (unstyle), le „18ème“, le „colonial“ et le „Federal Victorian“. Le meuble „moderne“ s'attribuait en 1946 le 26 % de la vente, tandis qu'il revendiquait aujourd'hui 45-60 % de la production globale.

Les bonnes formes de meubles „contemporains“ — comme on les appelle aux Etats Unis — sont déjà extrêmement répandues. Certains fabricants se sont d'abord opposés aux nouvelles tendances, puis ils ont été forcés d'y consacrer au moins une partie de leur production. Ce résultat est dû, en grande partie, à l'effort systématique du département d'architecture du Museum of Modern Art, dont les expositions, les concours, les publications, etc. influent sur de vastes couches de population. Il existe aujourd'hui env. 30 organisations de vente se consacrant exclusivement au meuble moderne. L'augmentation des possibilités de vente encourage peu à peu les petits et moyens fabricants à produire eux aussi des meubles modernes, en particulier des modèles simplifiés. Les grandes fabriques de meubles expérimentent actuellement sans cesse de nouveaux matériaux et principes de construction, comme par exemple les formes pressées en contre-plaqué, en plastique ou en diverses tôles. Peu de modèles se prêtent à la fabrication en série, les méthodes appropriées font encore défaut. Signalons, pourtant, une exception: une nouvelle chaise en plastique qui est moulée en 30 secondes. L'avenir du meuble moderne bien conçu dépend de la possibilité de fabriquer de bons modèles sur une large échelle et à bon marché.

Sièges en carton et plastique. Travaux d'élevés de l'Institut of Design, Illinois (pages 34—35)

L'instituteur de Design travaille actuellement à développer de nouvelles méthodes pour la fabrication de sièges, notamment de sièges moulés sous presse à basse pression. On a élaboré à cet effet des moules spéciaux en béton vernissé, lesquels exigent une matière de pressage à la fois malléable et très résistante à la traction, comme par exemple le carton. On obtient des sièges d'une solidité tout-à-fait suffisante en collant ensemble deux à trois feuilles d'un tel matériel. La mise en forme et le pliage des feuilles déterminent de nouvelles qualités organiques. Un seul modèle correctement découpé permet d'établir la forme à trois dimensions du siège.

James Prestini (page 40)

Cet artisan d'art, qui est d'autre part ingénieur, possède une extrême sensibilité de la matière. Ses formes de bois se distinguent non seulement par leur précision technique irréfutable, elles ont une perfection organique rarement égalée où la pureté de la forme semble née de la matière elle-même et d'où se dégage un intense sentiment d'harmonie.

Florence Forst (page 41)

Imaginant de nouvelles formes de vaisselle, Florence Forst tend à s'écarter des usages de table traditionnels, considérant que, de plus en plus, l'homme moderne évite d'encombrer son logis de grandes tables de salle à manger et préfère les formes étroites des bars d'appartement. Ces services sont pratiques, gracieux et originaux.

Summary

SENAI State Industrial College, Rio de Janeiro (pages 1—3)

The SENAI State Industrial College (Serviço nacional de aprendizagem industrial) was recently built in order to overcome the shortage of trained industrial workers. Today this school is providing 1400 apprentices with their technical and manual training.

The pillar-supported principal wing with the class-rooms, the workshops for the graphic trades and the chemography work-shops is disposed in the longitudinal axis of the site. The workshops for the heavy industries are joined in a separate wing to the principal building on one side and are accommodated in a hall which is partly two stories high. The lecture room and the gymnasium were accommo-

dated in a separate unit at the north end of the site. The individual floors are connected vertically by a ramp and secondary stairs. There are open and enclosed sports and rest facilities.

Day School „am Hang“, Dormagen, Cologne (pages 4—5)

This day school is a private institution of the Catholic Education Society of Cologne. A school with living-rooms for the personnel was required for a Children's and Youth Home (Raphaelshaus, Dormagen, District Düsseldorf), which had existed for some 50 years and was without a schoolhouse. The charges — they are children objectively or subjectively neglected-live at the Home, and the school is only about 50 yards from their day-rooms and bedrooms.

The building site is a slope on a path running from north-west to south-east in the Home grounds. The slope ends in a park.

The building follows a slight curve of the path and takes advantage of the sloping site. The ground-floor, which is accessible from the path, accommodates eight schoolrooms, and the basement contains the service rooms, etc. of the school and the bedrooms and day-rooms for the personnel. A porch projecting on the path front leads into the class-rooms through five vestibules. The class-rooms open on their entire length and height (french windows and transoms) upon an open terrace in front, while the ceilings of the rooms constitute the roof of the house and rise slightly towards the window wall.

The basement accommodates teachers and kindergarten mistresses in 18 single rooms, from which, thanks to the slope, the garden is directly accessible.

The school is built in masonry with red clinker facings. Steel concrete constructions with mild steel tube supports constitute the bearing elements. Building time: October 1948—August 1949. Cost: approximately 350,000 DM, i. e. approx. 55 DM per cubic metre.

Medical Station, McHenry, Illinois (pages 6—7)

A site in the centre of McHenry had to be chosen for the premises of a surgeon and a dentist. Since the site measures only approx. 12x30 m., the building takes up the greater part of the site.

On the ground-floor are the reception and waiting-rooms of the physician and dentist, as well as two offices with separate reception rooms. The basement accommodates a small flat, the laboratory and the heating. In the course of time the necessity arose of letting these rooms alternately to different specialists from Chicago. Each of these specialists is present at the Station at certain pre-arranged times to treat special cases.

Building year: 1949. Cost: approx. \$ 35,000.

Studio Flats, Buenos Aires (pages 8—9)

A house with studio flats and some shop premises on the ground-floor was to be built in the centre of Buenos Aires. The seven studio flats on two floors are accessible from along the garden room, which is two stories high. The roof, i. e., the ceiling of the top floor, is vaulted.

Ferro-concrete construction. Façade in steel and various glass units.

Apartment House in Lima (pages 10—11)

Apartments had to be designed at Lima for European tenants combining modern European comfort with the special requirements of the tropics. The requirements of climatic conditions were pleasantly and suitably answered by the old colonial houses in Lima. Their large latticed windows soften the bright light. The rooms are arranged around a palm-shaded interior court which may be quite small-dimensioned owing to the vertical rays of the sun.

For this reason the architect strove to adapt the tradition to a modern architectural conception. The white finish of the rooms and the use of coloured ceramic slabs as coverings for stair and gallery parapets is a further return to colonial motives, giving the rooms a fresh, cool character. The living-rooms are equipped with fireplaces as a protection against the high degree of atmospheric humidity. Building time: 10 months. Cost: 360,000 Soles, incl. architect's fees.

Apartment House in Buenos Aires (pages 12—14)

The Belgrano Flats comprise 16 or 8 one-floor one and two-room flats respectively, 4 two-story three-room flats and a three-room penthouse flat.

The two-story flats in the north-eastern section of the building stand back from the main façade and are protected against the sun's rays by trees reaching up to the

height of the house. The living-room of these apartments is partly two stories high and thus acquires a studio-like appearance. Balconies accessible from the upper floor of the flats give a free view towards the north-east. On the 7th floor there is a physician's practice in the north-eastern part while the appurtenant flat, which is directly connected with it, is situated on the 8th floor.

There is a three-room penthouse flat with large terraces and a winter garden.

On the ground-floor of the apartment house there are an entrance hall, a common-room for children and the service-rooms. A covered stair unit connects the hall with the separate slanting one-story wing of the restaurant.

Apartment House for a Building Association (page 15)

The apartment house in rue Ranelagh, Paris, under construction for a housing estate, is the first house built in accordance with a Swedish prototype by SCODAF Société Coopération d'Habitat Français.

A garage for 10—12 cars is accommodated in the basement; the hall, separated from the drive by an interior garden, is on the ground-floor together with two two-room flats, the caretaker's apartment and the corridor leading to the garden. Above, there are six storeys with the plan illustrated. The top floor, the entrance to which is on the sixth, comprises a small private hotel with 3 rooms, a kitchen and 2 bathrooms, as well as a reception room and lounge of 12 m. width and 6 m. depth with a southern exposure, a terrace with a width of 2.50 m. and the hall with the stairs and the steps to the roof garden.

A Museum builds a Model House (pages 16—19)

The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, a progressive museum, has found new ways of bringing the public into closer contact with modern liberal and applied arts, and of educating it by means of exhibitions and publications. It aims at popularizing correctly designed articles of everyday use and at attracting the public's interest to cultural questions of the day.

With this in mind, the Walker Art Center, with the assistance of the Home Institute of the Northwestern National Bank in Minneapolis, twice built large model houses on its premises and thus enabled a closer contact to be established between the public and modern home-building trends. The principal idea was to show that considerably better-than-usual solutions can be found with normal costs and materials available and used for average homes everywhere.

The Idea House II was built for a family of four, two adults and two children. The rectangular site, which slopes towards the north, is surrounded by trees. The basement accommodates the porch and the car port with direct access to the entrance hall, and, in addition, a workshop and a large room for storing gardening implements.

The living quarters proper — with a southern exposure — contain all the elements required for entertaining, rest, preparation of meals, dining-room, etc., and in summer the area may be enlarged by a covered terrace and an open one. A small staircase leads to the upper floor with the combination living and bedroom of the parents and the separate children's apartment. The parents' room may be opened towards the lower living quarters, and the children's apartment can be converted into one large room or three smaller rooms as required. The facilities for converting the individual living units into larger or smaller rooms is a characteristic of this house — the kitchen on the ground-floor can also be made integral with the apartment area or partitioned off by a folding door.

The New Model House of the Museum of Modern Art, New York (pages 20—23)

In the US the development of house-building in the suburbs of the large towns and in the country shows an increasing tendency to depart from simple detached houses in favour of housing estates. The problem is that the house types are not, as a rule, mass-produced but that traditional construction methods are applied. In order to show that good solutions may be arrived at under definite, limited circumstances, the Department of Architecture of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, commissioned Gregory Ain, an architect well versed in the field of inexpensive building, to design a house type which could be adapted to any requirements with inconsiderable modifications. In his housing estates, Ain tries to avoid the monotonous rows of boxes of identical houses and of miniature stables.

One of his most remarkable contributions to the design of good, small dwelling units is the Mar Vista Section estate in Los Angeles consisting of types similar to the model house of the Museum of Modern Art.

The house was designed for a family with two children. A flat, comparatively small site of 36 m. length is required, whose width of 18 m. is practically all built up. Although the model house is designed as a detached house, there is the possibility of combining it with similar houses of a housing estate.

The living rooms have a southern exposure, while the children's apartment faces the north. A characteristic feature of the plan is the adaptability of the individual rooms, achieved by large and small sliding walls. The living-room, dining-alcove, the parents' room and the kitchen can be turned into one large unit or be used as separate entities. The children's apartment can also be subdivided into two rooms, and it is separated from the other rooms by a corridor. The system of movable walls provides a wealth of combination possibilities without departing from a given conception of order.

Building costs: When manufactured in some quantity, the single house would cost between \$ 15,500 and 19,500.

The Contour Delineator (page 24)

Rudolph Jorgt, teacher at Layton Art School, Milwaukee, has developed a very interesting instrument, the contour delineator, for the designing of chairs of all types and their adaptation to individual requirements. Two frames with steel netting stretched on are placed 2 feet apart. The sitting and lying positions are determined by inserting steel rods into the two nets and changing their positions until the resulting form constitutes a comfortable individual support for sitting or lying.

Contour Studies (pages 25—29)

Our era requires a variety of chair shapes adapted to the various sitting postures. These postures range (in a household) from the upright, formal attitude around the dinner-table to lying in bed — there is the dinner-table chair for upright sitting; the working chair for reading, knitting, sewing (again designed for upright sitting but giving greater comfort and freedom of movement); the arm-chair, the easy-chair with all its types; the modern seat for cosy, congenial getting-together around a low table; the chair for proper relaxation, supporting the head as well as the entire body; and finally, the chaise longue which holds and supports the body in complete relaxation.

We set ourselves the task of determining whether a chair form could be evolved which constitutes a plurality of individual seating positions. We designed frames for three sitting postures (dinner-table and reading chair, easy-chair and chaise longue), covered them with clay and sat different people in their seats. Every one of these many helpers left his individual imprint in the clay seat. Since he had to remain seated for some time, he did not leave a momentary "anatomically correct" imprint but a sum of imprints depicting all his changes of position during a long session, every shift of his body and limbs as a result of fatigue and with a view to assuming a more "easy" posture.

It is only by consistently applying the forms thus obtained, i. e., entirely or partially adopting the measurements of the various shapes of seat, of backs and hand-rests, that we can evolve chair types worthy of consideration.

At present it is an arm-chair (e. g. made of wood and rattan) that has been evolved farthest: the form of the yoke for the seat and back is in accordance with the data established in the practical tests. The unusual shape of the arm-rests is also influenced by these data, for it was found that a plastic shape evolved by the active sense of feeling at the points where heavy loads are applied (such as handles, arm-rests) is particularly suitable for absolute safety in sitting down and getting up.

Upholstered furniture with metal frames (pages 30—31)

The choice and combination of the materials are important, at times even essential for the character of a piece of furniture, its design and shape.

As against wood, metal, thanks to its elastic properties and its easy and simple bending, permits of entirely novel designs being created. Furthermore, metal enables the dimensions to be reduced; the joints and intersections with bolts and welds are smaller and very often much simpler. From these properties there arise new modes of design and character.

The chairs shown are characterized by the uncompromising and consistent separation of frame and upholstery into two elements independent in respect of their function, design and manufacture. Seat and back, i. e., the parts with which the sitter is in direct contact, are upholstered. The metal frame is only the supporting element and its function is to hold the upholstery in its appointed position.

Bedroom Furniture (page 32)

The beds, the heads of which are cut out of a plywood sheet, are elegant and the steel tube legs supporting them give them lightness and create an impression of floating. Instead of the conventional chest-of-drawers a bureau was designed in order to gain more room for the accommodation of linen, underclothes, etc. The usual metal handles have been replaced by plywood, bent concave and affixed to the front of the individual drawers.

All-purpose shelf (page 33)

The vertical shelf supports consist of two separate parts placed back to back and bolted together. The length of the shelves is determined by their purpose, and thus the shelf permits of widest application. Thanks to its construction it is light and transparent, and avoids the massive heaviness usually associated with other shelves. The assembly is simple and fool-proof.

Manufacture, Sale and Repetition Production of Furniture in the US (page 34)

With its two large markets, "American Furniture Mart" and "Merchandise Mart" Chicago is the pivotal point of US economy as a marketing centre of the furniture industry, the manufacturing centre of which lies in the heart of the State of Michigan.

Retailers and department stores in the US calculate a considerably higher margin on the cost price of furniture than is usual in Switzerland. The increased purchase prices naturally have a considerable influence upon manufacture and sales. The manufacture of a so-called low-cost piece thus seems to be barred. Despite this, a simple S-shaped dining-room chair made of chromium-plated steel tubing with upholstered seat and back can be purchased for \$2 in the retail trade, while the manufacturing cost must not exceed \$0.50.

The costs at the beginning of repetition production are vast; they comprise the acquisition of new machines and tools and training of specialists for each operation. For this reason, the manufacture of new types is often dispensed with and the production of old models with assured sales continued.

A report issued by Merchandise Mart in 1947 clearly reflects the fluctuations in the sales of furniture caused by fashion both in respect of style and the wood and colours. In 1943 the production of walnut furniture was 13 %, 1947 as much as 34 %; mahogany being reduced in the same period by 20 % to a mere 26 % of the total production. In the same period maple decreased by 32 %. Today the majority of the woods used are light, such as birch and light oak. This trend is largely due to the spread of modern furniture.

In 1948 the most popular style was "modern", then "unstyled" or "conventional", 18th century, Colonial, Federal Victorian. The quota of "modern" furniture in 1946 was 25 %, while it represents between 45 and 60 % of the total production today.

This style, which is called "contemporary" in the US, has a vast spread today. Only a few years ago firms endeavoured to suppress the modern trend, but when they failed to do so, they were forced to switch part of their production over to contemporary furniture. This success is partly due to the unremitting and consistent work of the Architecture Department of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which influences wide sections of the population by exhibitions, competitions, books, etc.

Today contemporary furniture sells more easily since approximately 30 selling organizations exist which specialize exclusively in this type. The increase of sales possibilities encourages the factories with small production capacity to manufacture modern furniture in simplified types.

The large furniture factories are continually engaged in experimenting with new materials and designs, such as seat designs made of plywood, plastics and sheet metal. The number of models and methods enabling them to be repetition-produced is still very limited. The spread of contemporary furniture depends on whether good models can be manufactured at low cost.

Cardboard and Plastic Chairs (pages 34—35)

Designed by Students of the Institute of Design, Illinois, Institute of Technology, Chicago.

The Institute of Design is at present engaged in experiments for the development of new methods for the manufacture of chairs. New glazed concrete moulds are developed for low-pressure moulding, and they require a soft moulding material of high tensile strength, such as cardboard. By gluing two or three layers of this material together, an absolutely adequate strength of the seat is obtained.

Bending and folding the flat sheet material produce new structural qualities. A single, accurately designed cut-out suffices for the production of the three-dimensional form of the chair.

James Prestini (page 40)

Prestini elaborates the shape of the bowl with a stupendous sensitiveness for the material until it has acquired absolute perfection. The perfection of shape goes hand in hand with Prestini's manual precision. His work shows complete harmony between the purity of form, the elaborateness of creation and a "feeling" for the material.

Florence Forst (page 41)

Florence Forst endeavours to achieve a departure from traditional table-service conventions by creating novel crockery designs. These touch a personal note and are specially adapted to modern trends, such as the predilection for narrow tables, e. g., the breakfast bar, and are ideal when the number of tables in the household is restricted to a minimum.

Übersetzungen:

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191 Seiten mit vielen Fotos, Zeichnungen und farbigen Abbildungen. Preis Schwed. Kr. 18.—.

Das Buch gliedert sich in die Kapitel: Ziele und Tätigkeit des Kooperativa Förbundets Arkitektkontor, Inneneinrichtungen, Fragen der Innenraumgestaltung, Wettbewerbe, Siedlungsbau. —

Vor einem Jahrhundert begann sich die Veränderung des Lebensstils, der Gebräuche und Gewohnheiten des schwedischen Konsumenten abzuzeichnen. Diese Veränderung war das Resultat der industriellen Umwälzung, welche mit einer ungeheuren Dynamik das alte patriarchalische Handwerk als tragende Schicht der schwedischen Wirtschaft zerstörte und eine Krise des gesamten menschlichen Seins herausführte. Die Folge dieser Umwälzung war gleichzeitig die Auflösung des alten Haushaltssystems der Selbstversorgung. Die Zerstörung der breiten ökonomischen Basis des Handwerkers führte dazu, daß dieser nicht mehr in der Lage war, seinen Gesellen die nötige Unterkunft und Verpflegung zu sichern. Der Untergang des Gildensystems brachte weittragende Veränderungen in der sozialen Struktur des gesamten Landes. Das natürliche Verhältnis des Meisters zu seinen Gesellen wurde radikal umgestaltet.

In diesen Zeitpunkt der Umschichtungen der gesellschaftlichen Situation fällt die Gründung der schwedischen Konsumvereine, welche innert kurzer Zeit großen und schwierig zu lösenden Problemen gegenüberstan-

den. Ursprünglich zum Zweck der Vermittlung von Konsumgütern begründet, sahen sich die Genossenschaften bald den wesentlich komplizierteren Fragen des Wohnbaues gegenübergestellt und mußten sich mit der Lösung von Unterkunftsfragen für die aus ihrer natürlichen Bindung herausgerissenen Handwerksgelesen befassen. Die erste Baugesellschaft in Schweden wurde 1872 in Göteborg gegründet. Im darauffolgenden Jahre folgte Stockholm mit der Gründung einer weiteren Baugenossenschaft, aber es war offensichtlich, daß der Weg schwierig war, weil die Lösung der Probleme der Nahrungsverteilung und später der Lebensmittelproduktion alle verfügbaren Kräfte absorbierte. Durch die Konzentrierung der industriellen Produktion in den Städten und die daraus resultierende Ansammlung von Menschenmassen entstanden enorme Aufgaben in der Beschaffung von Unterkünften. Deshalb wurde es als notwendig erachtet, die Wohnbaugenossenschaften so selbständig wie möglich sich entwickeln zu lassen. Diese Entfaltung wurde jedoch durch ein Gesetz behindert, welches nur Aktiengesellschaften den Besitz und das Bauen von Mietshäusern gestattete. Bis 1896 stagnierte deshalb die Entwicklung dieser bereits über 20 Jahren bestehenden Baugenossenschaften.

Die eigentliche Entfaltung der Bautätigkeit begann erst nach dem ersten Weltkrieg. Im Jahre 1924 wurde das «Architects' Office» gegründet, welches eine große Tätigkeit der Planung und der Organisation des Wohnbaues entwickelte. Das Wohnen wurde nach völlig neuen Gesichtspunkten geplant. Wohnen und Planen traten in den Mittelpunkt des öffentlichen Interesses und wurden zu den Hauptfaktoren des gemeinschaftlichen Willens der Gesellschaft. Die gesunde Wohnung war eine selbstverständliche Forderung aller Gesellschaftsschichten. Die damalige Prosperität der schwedischen Wirtschaft und die daraus resultierende Hebung des Lebensstandards der Bevölkerung kam dieser Forderung weitgehend entgegen. Die Bautätigkeit wuchs und große Wohnbauprogramme wurden verwirklicht.

Die Tätigkeit der schwedischen Baugenossenschaften hat wesentlich dazu beigetragen, die Entstehung von Elendsquartieren, wie sie in vielen europäischen Großstädten vorhanden sind, zu verhindern und ist deshalb zu einem sozialen Faktor von weittragender Bedeutung geworden. Vielleicht befriedigen uns nicht alle Formen der ästhetischen Entwicklung der Wohnbautypen; die Verpflichtung gegenüber dem alten, heimatlichen Stil des Wohnbaues scheint eine gewisse Hemmung für die Ausbreitung der modernen Architektur in Schweden zu sein. Ansätze dazu sind jedoch durchaus vorhanden, wie einige interessante Beispiele dies dokumentieren. R. P. L.

Ein weiterer Band «Swedish Cooperative Union and Wholesale Society's Architects' Office 1925—1949 / Part 1», ebenfalls im Kooperativa Förbundets Bokförlag in Stockholm erschienen, behandelt die Tätigkeit der schwedischen Konsumgenossenschaften auf den Gebieten des Baues von Läden, Warenhäusern, Restaurants, Industrieanlagen, Lagerhäusern usw. Auf 164 Seiten ist diese Arbeit des «Ar-

chitects' Office» (Chefarchitekt Eskil Sundahl) durch eine reiche Dokumentation überzeugend dargestellt.

R. P. L.

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