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Summary

Prefabricated single house types (pages 76-84)

System and Materials

Since 1925 the French designer Jean Prouvé and his brother Henri Prouvé, architect, as well as a number of progressive Paris architects have been engaged in developing a novel building system based largely upon metal.

Composition

The skeleton is formed by bent and electrically welded sheet steel, the best possible stability being attempted.

The skeleton is composed of the following parts: 1. The foundation; 2. the principal channel-section pillars; 3. a ridge purlin.

Roof

The standard width of the roof elements is 50 cm, the length may exceed 8 m.

Wall Elements

Exterior and interior wall and ceiling elements consist of aluminium and steel section frames with spaces for any type of insulating material.

Assembly

All buildings are erected on a module strictly adhered to. The metal structure is principally composed of three elements: the basement with masonry and main girder; the principal elements of the skeleton, viz. one or more channel-section supports anchored to the main girders and serving as bearings for the ridge purlin. The top part consists of the purlin, front girder and aluminium roof panels formed integrally.

Villa at St. Clair, Côte d'Azur

Leaning against a long broken stone wall two units, separate, under a common roof: the long rectangle containing the bedrooms, shower, toilet and WC, backs away from the square of the large living and dining-room with a small kitchen. In front of all rooms, a wide, covered garden veranda.

«Coque» Type

It consists of an obliquely rising roof with a round joint leading into the vertical wall.

The roof/wall elements are up to 1.20 m wide and can be supplied in lengths up to a maximum of 8 m.

Houses types for warm climates (pages 85-86)

The plans for type houses made of prefabricated «Durisol» ceiling and wall elements were made for very warm climates.

The costs indicated below for the types here illustrated have been calculated on the basis of Swiss building standards and prices for a number of at least 100 units to be built together, including fees: One-room house: Frs. 6500; two-room house: Frs. 8000; three-room house: Frs. 11 500; four-room house: Frs. 15 000. Cost of the row combination illustrated: approx. Frs. 69 000. Detached house 3½ rooms, with garage: Frs. 22 000.

Despite the pronounced economy in space, the type houses answer the requirements for good and short communication in the house, for separation of the various domestic functions. Several plan types which can be combined within a row meet varying space requirements. This is of particular importance when large housing estates are built within which the space requirements of the inhabitants can be met by exchange.

Building system: Vertical «Durisol» panels, with plaster on both sides, for the walls and lightly re-inforced roof panels with water-repellent surfacing allow a house to be erected, without any plaster work, in a very short time. The unit size being only 50 cm, a comparatively great latitude for plan variation is given.

Single-family house Craven, Dune Acres, Indiana (pages 87-90)

Forty miles from Chicago wide sand dunes with high oaks stretch along Lake Michigan.

The architects did not take the solution of the simple building programme too lightly. They succeeded in fitting all rooms into a fully closed narrow rectangle, an oblique wall following the rise of the ground cutting one unexcavated quarter from the basement.

The basement contains the entrance, studio, WC, garage and laundry; the upper floor, living-room, kitchen, bedrooms and studio; two bathrooms adjoin the bedrooms in the north. The oblique basement wall is visible on the upper floor in that the large fireplace is inclined.

The heating of the house by the sun plays an important role in the general heating programme. A roof projection of approx. 1 m protects against the rays of the summer sun while fully admitting the winter sun.

Masonry: cell concrete inside and outside without plaster; timber skeleton. The floors are partly cast direct on the site and partly constructed as ferro-concrete elements with oak parquet.

Merkur Department Store, Heilbronn (pages 91-96)

The business and architectural centre of Heilbronn, the old section of the town, was destroyed in 1944. The currency reform initiated lively reconstruction activity.

In accordance with the character of a store which, properly speaking, is a public warehouse, the plan is very simple: large, unbroken sales rooms (23×44 m) on the roadside of the principal floors; delivery, stores, heating and cloakrooms in the basement. Owing to the inclined site, the height of the ground-floor rooms varies between 4.80 and 3.50 m. Two upper floors are 3.50 m high, the top floor 3 m.

Both architect and town planner endeavoured, in view of the surroundings, to give the bulky structure a light and floating appearance.

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Buchbesprechungen

Adolf G. Schneck: Das Polstermöbel. Verlag Julius Hoffmann, Stuttgart. 120 Seiten, 280 Photos, 70 Maßzeichnungen 3. Auflage. Fr. 32.05.

In der Buchreihe «Das Möbel als Gebrauchsgegenstand» ist der 4. Band «Das Polstermöbel in Bild und Konstruktion» in stark erweiterter und neu ausgestatteter Auflage erschienen. Der in Fackkreisen weitherum bekannte Stuttgarter Adolf G. Schneck legt mit diesem Band ein wertvolles Buch in die Hände von Architekten, Möbelentwerfern und Möbelkäufern. Die Gruppen: Holzgestelle mit Kissen und Polstern, Vollpolster, Schlafsofa, Liegesessel, Stahlrohrmöbel, Bürostühle, Kino- und Theaterstuhl und Korbmöbel sind mit deutschen, amerikanischen, schweizerischen (R. Baumgartner, Hans Schenker, Walter Frey, Hugo Peters), schwedischen, finnischen, dänischen und leider sehr wenigen italienischen, holländischen und englischen Beispielen belegt. Ohne die Unterschriften zu lesen, springen einem die für ihre Entwerfer typischen Lösungen in die Augen: das schwedische Möbel mit einer gewissen schüchternen Eleganz, das finnische mit frischer Unbekümmertheit, das amerikanische, wohl heute das kühnste Möbel (Allan Gould fällt mit einigen Stuhl-Typen mit Schnurbespannung auf), die gezeigten schweizerischen Beispiele sind zum Teil bemüht konservativ und bürgerlich; glücklicherweise ist die Auswahl nicht repräsentativ für unser Möbelschaffen. Die deutschen Lösungen kennzeichnen solides sauberes handwerkliches Können, jedoch fehlen in die Zukunft weisende Vorschläge.

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