

Summary

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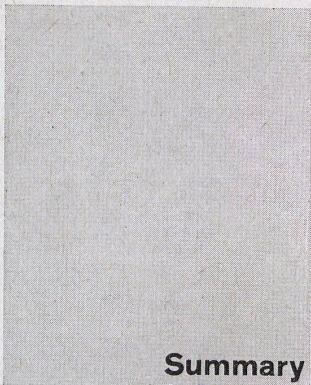
une «loi sur les drogues et les denrées alimentaires». Un enrobage de saccharine (la dorure de la pillule-panacée) peut être plus que dégoûtant! On ne s'empoisonne pas seulement avec les drogues qu'on ingurgite, mais aussi par des influences extérieures agissant sur les sens. L'équilibre biologique ne peut être retrouvé qu'au moyen d'une planification consciente, exécutée sur des bases scientifiques. Mais une telle œuvre se fonde sur l'étroite collaboration d'hommes convaincus de la nécessité et de l'importance de la science qui sert la planification et l'aménagement raisonnable de notre site de construction.

Corps d'éclairage et lampes (pages 218—219)

Meubles de Poul Kjaerholm (pages 220—221)

Ustensiles et terrains de jeu pour enfants à Ulm (pages 222—223)

Un groupe de travail de l'École populaire supérieure décida de créer des terrains de jeu pour les enfants de la ville d'Ulm. En automne 1951, on commença l'établissement des plans dans les trois groupes «Jardin et paysage», «Architecture» et «Aménagement». Les ustensiles de jeu devaient offrir comme qualités fondamentales: sécurité pour les enfants, stimulation de la phantasie enfantine et éducations aux belles formes. C'est ainsi que furent créés les plaques tournantes, engins d'escalade, ballons pour jeux d'équilibre, pas de géant, glissoires, bascules pivotantes et bien d'autres choses.



Summary

Community Center in Eagle Rock (pages 190—195)

A community center has to serve all sorts of purposes and be prepared for all kinds of events, most of which cannot be foreseen in advance. Neutra has sought in this Center to resolve the problem by making it possible for the large community hall on the two long sides and the stage on three sides to be opened completely. In this way the platform and dance floor are extended out into the open air, and in this way all kinds of possibilities are created for open-air and clubroom performances. This community center serves in the main children and young people. The large hall is used not only for dramatic performances or dancing but also for sports, musical concerts and social events. In the club- and hobby room the wings can be extended by means of a movable platform, so that three levels are available for dramatic performances. The large hall as well as the clubroom can be served from the kitchen directly. The director of the community center has his office, glazed on three sides, between the covered playground in the open and the children's and infants' play meadow on the south side.

Langelinie Restaurant, Copenhagen (pages 196—200)

The building stands on the stretch of coast which is called "Langelinie" across from the harbour area of Copenhagen. To the east is the entrance to the harbour, to the west the rampart and the moat of the old castle of Copenhagen and a public car park.

In the recessed ground-floor there are situated, next to the built-over street and the 7 x 20 m. hall, a bar, the lavatories and the personnel lounge rooms. The upper floor measuring 37 x 37 m. contains

refreshment rooms and lounges along with the kitchen installations. The buffet is located in the centre. On the east side with a view over the harbour is the terrace restaurant on two levels above various storerooms, the yacht club dressing rooms and the toilets for terrace visitors. From the terrace two open-air stairways lead directly to the car parks. On the recessed top floor are installed the premises of the Royal Danish Yacht Club.

Private Home in Berlin (pages 201—203)

The rough structure of this house was erected from material taken from a ruin located on the site. The house stands on the back end of the site, far back from the street. The open space was laid out as a smooth lawn without any flower beds; around the edges is a stand of fine old trees, including an especially remarkable larch. The open space serves as a kind of extension of the living quarters, which all open on to this lawn. The large panes are protected from downpours and direct sunlight by a canopy projecting from 60 to 90 cm. The living quarters are ventilated through two doors, one on each end of the glazed elevation.

Dwelling-House in High Sunderland (pages 204—207)

The house stands on a raised level site amongst the rolling hills. Trees create a natural shelter from the climatic conditions prevailing on the open hills and divide the house from the expansive country around.

The interior and the terraces' ground plan describes a rectangle of 35 x 13 m. The forecourt includes a parking-place for two cars and has a rather sober effect compared with the differently scaled and coloured patio on the south side. Most of the windows run from the floor to the ceiling and ensure wonderful views. The floor of the lounge is some 60 cms. deeper than those of the other rooms. In this way the occupants have a greater sense of security and feel themselves to be in the closest possible contact with the meadows in front of the windows.

The centre of the house is the kitchen which is near to the entrance hall, the play-room, the patio and the dining-room. The play-room will later be divided into two children's bedrooms. As a preliminary arrangement there are two sleeping-berths with built-in wardrobes and tables. An intercommunications system has been installed between the parents' bedroom and that of the children.

All the built-in furniture has been designed by the architect, whereas all the fabrics for the curtains and upholstered furniture have been designed, woven and dyed by the customer.

Holiday House in Malibu (pages 208—212)

When this house came to be planned it was attempted to render the sub-structure more delicate and to relate it better to the construction as a whole. The wood joists, which rest on piles, were designed to lie somewhat above the level of the sand and timber lattice girders to span the whole building at floor level. Static calculations and plans testify to the constructional and economic advantages of this method of construction, but the building authorities rejected any solution which departed from the normal order of things. The sub-structure is therefore conventional: 30 x 36 cm. wood joists lie on piles of 30 cms. diameter which are separated by intervals of 5.20 m. and sunk 4.50 m. deep into the ground. Reinforcement is effected by wood stiffeners of 10.2 x 15.2 cms. The ground plan of the building is in the shape of an H. The lounge, the dining-room and the kitchen are in that part of the house which faces the beach; the two bedrooms and the vestibule are to the rear. Two bathrooms and the forecourt form the connecting element. The winds from the sea are often so strong that it is impossible to make use of the balcony looking out on the beach. A further open-air seating area has therefore been laid out as an inner courtyard. This area visually supplements the interior and makes the sea visible from the glass walls of the main bedroom.

The fireplace rests on a reinforced concrete floor base which itself rests on a foundation. Three walls of the fireplace consist of transparent Pyrex glass. The sheet-metal panelled fireplace is surrounded by a skylight, over which searchlights have been installed. Thus the skylight becomes an abundant source of light, in fact the main source of light for the living-quarters.

Cloakroom Building on the Walensee (pages 213—215)

Popular bathing and camping sites are available to everybody on a lightly wooded strip of beach.

The Government of the Canton of Glarus allowed the cloakroom building to be constructed. The visitors to the beach, however, are not forced to make use of the building—restrictions have been dispensed with. The layout will be completed by a large three-stage fountain and a separate installation. Out on the beach brick cooksheds have been set up. The beach is submerged at high water. Because of this and in order to preserve the charm of the lakeside, two reinforced concrete slabs have been so laid upon tubular steel supports that the building appears to be floating and transparent.

Zurich Community Centre (page 216)

The meadow upon which the Wollishofen Community Centre is to be built lies within the delta of an ancient brook which is today canalized. The lakeside site is connected with a shopping centre by a pedestrian underpass which goes beneath both railway and highway. Trees and thick bushes on the southern and western edges screen the meadow from the neighbouring land.

The desiderata were a clubroom with a reading corner, an equally large work-room with a hobby nook, a hall with the director's desk and the necessary adjoining rooms. A covered verandah is to be at the disposal of those who want to lounge in the open-air. An out-of-service steamship in the harbour will be used as a library.

The Interrelationship of the Urban, the Rural and the Human (page 217)

Town-planning could be to be sure proceed along strictly scientific lines. Its scientific status, however, is frequently jeopardized in the give-and-take of discussion with legislative bodies or has to be sacrificed owing to directives of the authorities. For the most part, new needs and thus new worries (transformation, extension or destruction of local patterns and of public services) induce citizens to undertake joint action. In this connection, they come up against very specific and unique challenges calling for individual, novel solutions; as a rule, however, they allow themselves to be guided not by pure reason but by feelings, habits and traditions and therefore arrive for the wrong reasons at a conclusion that does not do full justice to the given requirements. Such questionable considerations thereupon eventuate in decisions followed up by still more dubious practical realizations. It is a grave and even dangerous tendency to put the planning of a local living pattern, not on a basis of rational knowledge, but on the basis of emotional conceit.

Sociologists could make an inestimable contribution to the clarification of this problem and to the ridding of architecture of idyllic sentimentality and of dependence on false and ill-advised models.

How the human community surrounds, let us say, a Venetian piazza with the church and the reliquary of a patron saint, how a Buddhist temple on a Siamese canal or the church of an urban parish stand in organic relationship to their environment—all this has been recognized by social psychologists as of the utmost significance for the growth of human living patterns. This close integration of the sacred and the profane, in contrast to our grossly inadequate town-planning, was for millennia at the very heart of the whole concept of the organized human community.

The romantic infatuation in America (just as in Central Europe—Ed.) results in the outskirts of cities being given the appearance—as regards their lay-out—of a rural village.

A town-planner to be sure was given the opportunity to evolve a plan from the ground up when he was entrusted with a large-scale program by Alexander the Great, William Penn or by the English authorities after the late war. As a rule, however, the planner was called to the side of a patient shaking with fever, prostrated by asthma or with entire parts of his organism paralyzed. Like the practising physician, the planner is by no means a pure scientist and his scientific know-how and the technical means at his disposal are happily supplemented at the sick bed by an encouraging, kindly and convincing manner.

The planner no doubt possesses some scientific interests and often proceeds as a "practical" economist; but with nimble artistry he often goes far beyond the typical scientific minutiae which are apt to be his primary concern.

The planning of an outlying urban district is never a mere laboratory experiment. Its bases have to be studied on the spot. Other suburban communities, which can furnish material for comparative purposes, serve as guides. An urban living unit, unlike the rural village, does not constitute an economically and culturally independent whole. It is a characteristic property of a village that it is more open and helpless before potent external concepts than a town.

Ralph L. Beales has shown in this connection that the cultural and social nature of the inhabitants of a village are very similar. On the other hand, the outskirts of a city show a greater differentiation and variety of patterns of living—if the urban complex in question is not stamped with a uniform character stemming from a reliance on a single industry (cf. the Pullman Palace Car town near Chicago in the Eighties).

The city outskirts of today often serve as a dormitory for a more or less invariable work-centre. The development of public transport and the technique of the automobile industry provokes nomadic instincts and reflex activities in such a way that the outskirts become a nocturnal anchor for season-ticket holders, who go back and forth along the transport arteries.

Can and should such a place of shelter for the owner of a season ticket be fashioned along the lines of an apparently antarchical and self-sufficient village? Fishermen not only sail in similar boats; they catch similar fish and bring them in to similar market squares. The users of weekly or monthly season tickets sit in vehicles which, it is true, resemble one another, and purchase, before they return home, similar tinned and frozen goods in the shops. However, they come from very different types of work and activities. Differing types of education and professional knowledge and occupation lead to a great multiplicity of ways of thinking and social grades.

In a village the extent of employable land and the birth and death figures must be harmoniously related to each other—if not trouble will arise. But in the outskirts of a town the causes of complications for the larger part lie outside them (crises in the work-centre, slump on the stock exchanges).

The 'Kirchplatz,' the 'plaza' or the 'forum' were originally not so much trade centres as places where the citizens could gather for religious festivities, open-air politics, sport and games. It is also true that general meetings took place in the open fields "extra muros;" not only to gain more space but also to ensure a spatial separation from the town. Such festivities could be signs of times of peace or peaceful sentiments which, after years of endurance of war, were beginning to emerge as the inhabitants felt themselves secure once more and began to rise from their poverty.

In prehistoric Machu Picchu in Peru or in Chichen Itzá the Mayas used to gather together in a grassy open space which would be carefully preserved from being built up. Such open areas would later be paved and serve as market squares. It would be most questionable to wish to maintain that such a place which functions as a political and intellectual centre comes in the first place from the market.

In the pseudo-villages of the United States (especially in the brand-new dressed-up outskirts of a town) you will find a few churches on large parking-areas so arranged that the churchgoers do not disturb one another. But the shopping centre, the market-halls with imitation retail shops belonging to wholesale firms covering the continent and branches of a big city store constitute the real centre of the village.

Movement away from a village can destroy the intimate ties within it and break its commercial backbone. On the other hand, change of living quarters in a city outskirts is an everyday matter. Generally speaking, people leave a village when no more work is at hand or when the ground is no longer able to feed the inhabitants. In a city outskirts people change their living quarters because of a change of their place of work, because of an alteration to their social status and their intellectual demands, and unlike emigration this movement is only a question of transport.

When village women leave their homes to take up jobs in the houses or businesses

of a neighbouring town the life of the village begins to crumble. If the village falls into the hands of real estate speculators it is possible that later it will become a city outskirts.

The permanent coalition of forces in a village—a thing of natural growth—will then be replaced by a planned organization. In the place of the neighbours' voluntary help (help in building, fire protection) will come public systems or commercial undertakings which will be concerned with their appropriate services. Less consideration will be given to the needs of the villagers; a business will operate independently and for quick profits.

Is the change from village life to town life the cause or the result of a different way of thinking? Which came first: the chicken or the egg? It's the hoary old question.

The matter cannot be dealt with by means of a questionnaire; instead the current conditions must be exactly known and studied so that they can be improved by planning.

And plan we must. The huge forces and masses involved do not allow us to jog along following historical examples. The present break with the past is perhaps no more radical than that revolutionary change which occurred when the Stone Age foragers banded themselves together and formed villages for the first time, but it is quicker.

Today science must get to work and trouble itself more than it has done up to now to accommodate itself to the variety of human existence, so that we shall not be overrun by the destructive influences contained in a form of progress which has so many contradictions within itself.

The patent pills of this fervently extolled progress require checking under a "pure food and drugs Act." A saccharine coating can be worse than disgusting! One is not poisoned by the drugs alone that one swallows, but also by other harmful influences which work upon the sense organs. The biological equilibrium can only be restored with the help of planning conscious of its own responsibility which is based on scientific principles. Such a task, however, must be founded on the closest cooperation among people who are convinced of the necessity and significance of science's serving to plan and order our architectural surroundings in the light of reason.

Lighting fixtures and lamps (pages 218—219)

Furniture by Poul Kjaerholm (pages 220—221)

Play Apparatus and Playgrounds for Children in Ulm (pages 222—223)

A work group of the Ulm university extension program first conceived the idea of creating children's playgrounds. In the autumn of 1951 planning got under way in the three work groups "Garden and Landscaping," "Architecture" and "Lay-out." The play apparatus had to meet severe fundamental requirements: safety for children, stimulation of the child's imagination and training of body and character. There were developed as a result revolving platforms, climbing jungles, balancing balls, skipping ropes, slides, seesaws and many other devices.

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