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Building for Farmers

by Hermann Hess

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The author of the introductory article takes up the possibility of profitable farming activity under the conditions prevailing at the present time in Switzerland. The situation is characterized by two factors. One is an extreme labour shortage, which forces the farmer himself and his family and relatives to run the farm themselves. The other factor, which has positive and negative effects, is the almost universal proximity of farms to areas of dense population. The saving in labour along with the high percentage of 'managers' produces a tendency toward stock raising, and this means that the stable becomes the focal point of farm building.

Agricultural Buildings, Type Expo 1964

Architect: Jakob Zweifel BSA/SIA, Zurich

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The agricultural division of the Swiss National Exhibition of 1964 was at the same time the 12th Swiss Agricultural and Forestry Exhibition. Its aim was to give farm owners and managers new ideas and suggestions for resolving operational and construction problems. However, at the same time it sought to interest architects to renew their concern with this difficult but challenging type of assignment.

The free-run stable as an example of a multi-purpose farm building with pertinent grade-level work premises and storage facilities. A lean-to roof constitutes an enormous umbrella, whose large support intervals make possible a flexible plan.

The residence as formal equivalent of the barn; – the large volume of the barn has to be counterbalanced aesthetically by the cubic shape of the farm residence. In the case of conventional farmhouses there is a danger that the residence becomes a mere barracks off to one side.

The farmstead in Bevaix, Neuchâtel, was intended to show that the Expo 1964 type can be applied in actual practice. This farmhouse was erected as a subsidized family farm within the scope of a large-scale settlement project.

The mountain stable at the Expo 1964 was built in but a few weeks by a group of non-builders and volunteers from all parts of the country, under the direction of an expert. Approximately one hundred volunteers took care of the excavation work, they laid up the concrete foundations and retaining walls, set up the stable walls and assembled the roof.

The group settlement is a new possible type of rural development, which possesses a certain elasticity as compared with the isolated farmstead. Not only can certain installations and machines be used jointly, but also there can be exchanges of labour.

Cattle Fattening Stable

Architects: Agricultural Building Co-operative, Brugg

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The Agricultural Building Co-operative of the Swiss Farmers' Association handles the planning of farmsteads and stables in all parts of Switzerland. It aims at a certain degree of standardization, with the various types having to be adapted to particular given circumstances. The barn on the steep slope, for instance, demonstrates this adaptability.

Barn on Steep Slope in Döttingen

Architects: Agricultural Building Co-operative, Brugg

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Farm in Wolfwil

Architects: Agricultural Building Co-operative, Brugg

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Farm near Basadingen TG

Architects: Swiss Association for Interior Resettlement and Industrial Agriculture

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Farm near Truttikon ZH

Architects: Swiss Association for Interior Resettlement and Industrial Agriculture

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'Aargau' Type Farm

Architects: Swiss Association for Interior Resettlement and Industrial Agriculture

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The first two farms show that the plants built by the SVIL are conceived on a very individual basis and therefore are very different in appearance. On the other hand, the SVIL is trying with its 'Aargau type colony' to arrive at standardization, which, however, can be adapted to the size of the concern and type of operation within the scope of definite limits. There are to be erected in the Canton of Aargau around 70 farms of this type; the one illustrated here is distinguished by a relatively large number of cattle.

Model Farm of Prefabricated Elements in Hessen

Architect: Karl Wilhelm Schüssler, Wiesbaden

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This farm is part of a programme of model projects of the Association for the Improvement of the Agricultural Economy in Hessen. The farm, which has to be articulated in staggered fashion in accordance with various functions, is so integrated in the rolling hilly landscape of the Odenwald that it accents its surroundings at the same time as it harmonizes with them. The construction materials are natural untreated timber, reddish-brown masonry stone and asbestos cement left in natural colour.

The Jonen Farm in Unter-Rifferswil

Architect: Heinz Hess, Zurich

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The residence floor is situated one storey higher than the utility level. The lavatory and cloakroom with shower facility, the machinery park, the garage the wood stores and the root cellar are at grade level beneath the residence floor and with access to the side entrance. The material employed everywhere was red untreated brick and unplanned pine boarding; silo and manure pit are of reinforced concrete.

The Painter Bruno Müller

by Peter F. Althaus

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The painter Bruno Müller, born in Basel in 1929, resident in Paris since 1950, is one of those young artists who do not seek new materials and techniques to express the spirit of modern life, but attempt to continue a tradition. His pictures are formulations of the one theme: the love encounter. Abstraction with Müller does not mean: spiritualization of the environment, but: increase in vitality. The curves and rhythms of his painting are, however, not to be understood as action painting; they are re-elaborated and refined over a period of many months. The more vital and violent seems the composition, the stronger is the compulsion in the direction of the architectural.

Fritz Wotruba's Relief in Marburg an der Lahn

by Otto Breicha

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The Austrian sculptor Fritz Wotruba created for the lecture-hall building of the University of Marburg an der Lahn a relief 32 meters in length and 3.5 meters high. It is articulated into thirteen slender erect figures, formed by displacements and projections of the blocks of Mannersdorf limestone (the material employed on the buildings along the Ringstrasse in Vienna).

The Sense and the Nonsense of the Art Museum in the Modern Age

by Georg Schmidt

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The author, from 1939 to 1961 Director of the Basel Art Museum, brilliantly confronts the criticisms that can be levelled at the modern art museum and the valid arguments in its favour. The art museum removes works of art from the realm of use for which they were created; by massing them it prevents any private dialogue between the individual work of art and the individual person; it stores up significant and insignificant things indiscriminately; it smothers everything in the past; it promotes 'museum art' which has been created solely with a view to display in museums. There emerges from this complex of problems precisely a set of counter-arguments: The confrontation of old and modern art appears especially instructive and significant. The museums are the refuges of lapsed cultures; here they are re-activated for the modern beholder. The dense concentration of so many works of art is an exciting instance of the creativity of man. Here too, contemporary art can be experienced in all its manifold variety. The museum is the democratic form of collecting, preserving and displaying art.