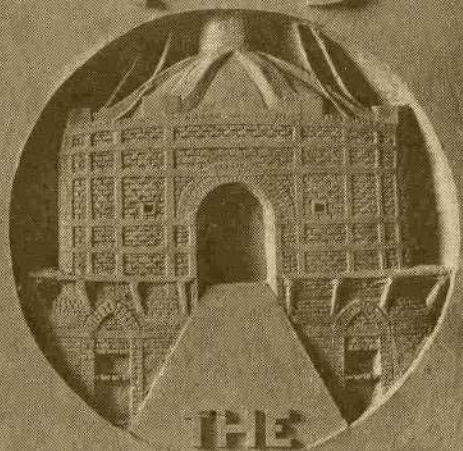


COMMON  
CLAY



THE  
AMERICAN  
TERRA COTTA  
AND CERAMIC CO  
CHICAGO ILL

APRIL • 1921



*Life? And worth living?*  
*Yes, with each part of us—*  
*Hurt of us, help of us, hope of us,*  
*heart of us,*  
*Life is worth living.*  
*Ah! with the whole of us,*  
*Will of us, brain of us, senses and*  
*soul of us.*

*Is life worth living?*  
*Aye, with the best of us,*  
*Heights of us, depths of us,*  
**LIFE IS THE TEST OF US!**

CORINNE ROOSEVELT ROBINSON





5

••• DISTINCTIVE BUILDINGS •••



FIRST NATIONAL BANK, OMAHA, NEB.  
GRAHAM-BURNHAM CO., ARCHITECTS



*Published by*

THE AMERICAN TERRA COTTA & CERAMIC CO.

1701 Prairie Ave., Chicago, Ill.

627 Plymouth Bldg., Minneapolis, Minn.

Terra Cotta, Ill.

Indianapolis, Ind.

## EDITORIAL

IN ALL manufactured products we find surface values and hidden values. Surface values are readily appraised; surface craftsmanship, general appearance, superficial texture, are all of value and the trained eye of the buyer has no difficulty in arriving at a speedy and correct appraisal. The hidden values are, however, far greater than the surface values and cannot be appraised so easily. The wise purchaser recognizes this fact. The amount of money spent in this country to determine the hidden values is enormous. Expensively equipped laboratories house carefully trained scientists who faithfully devote their career to the investigation of these values. Standard tests for certain materials have been adopted, practically regardless of cost, to peer into the body and heart of a product in the effort to determine the honesty and efficiency of the article. "All is not gold that glitters" is not a proverb but an axiom. The world accepts it and wisely so.

Like most manufactured products the surface values of Terra Cotta are easily recognizable. If the glaze be smoothly applied, if the ware be straight, if the color be as per sample, if the three dimensions be correct, the Terra Cotta is good ware as far as surface values can demonstrate. These values, however, while important and necessary constitute but a small proportion of the cost and value of the material. Physical and chemical tests to determine the greater hidden values have not yet been sufficiently developed. The ware can be tested for strength; but the result obtained tells only the strength of the material when the test was made. It is

possible to make ware which will pass such tests today, but which will deteriorate in a few years and crumble away. The tests used to ascertain the ability of the material to withstand severe climatic changes has not yet demonstrated their infallibility. No mechanical test has been devised to prove that the clay was selected carefully, treated properly, mixed scientifically. No test can demonstrate that the necessary heat was applied according to the correct heat curve. No test but time can prove whether the glaze was properly fitted to the body.

If physical and chemical tests were the measures of standards of the hidden values of Terra Cotta, the purchaser would have to trust to fortune. There is a test that can be applied, however, and one which costs nothing but a little judgment. Instead of being an expensive test, if properly applied, it will pay dividends. Some architects know of the test and it is no idle phrase in a specification which says, "The Terra Cotta shall be furnished by a manufacturer of established reputation." The only way you can be assured of honest Terra Cotta is to buy it from an honest manufacturer whose record proves beyond a question of a doubt that experience has taught him how to make good ware, and whose reputation forbids him to make bad ware. The values which are hidden in the material are not hidden in the man or the firm. Character is not formed in the dark, neither can the lack of it be successfully hidden. If you would test for the hidden values in Terra Cotta, apply the test of character to the maker in whom these values are not hidden. Such a test we welcome.



## BUTTON HOLE TALKS

W. D. GATES, PRESIDENT

HE had a very interesting face which I had been studying for some time. Not at all a beautiful face nor a smooth face nor a young face, but one that showed the marks of care, the effect of years of effort and exertion, all showing character. When the young spoiled Arthur, that had been sprawled across the lounge smoking his cigarette in the smoking compartment had gone out, this man whose face had attracted me, spoke out—

"They didn't make them like that when you and I were boys and it's more than likely it's more his father's and mother's than his own fault now. Our people were the old fashioned kind in that old fashioned time. Boys were then supposed to be useful as well as ornamental, in fact useful whether ornamental or not. As to that matter they had to be useful but were seldom or never ornamental. There were plenty of chores to do in those times and you and I know who did them. Satan had no chance at our idle hands then for those were not the kind of hands we had. There was no turning of a nickel faucet for water in those days but we got it from the source of supply, we went where it was and we "Toted" it to where it was wanted, personally conducted it. We were then personally acquainted with the axe and much attached to the buck saw. There were chickens to feed, pigs to feed, horses to feed, calves to feed and cows to feed and water. Never can I forget the cows and the water they could absorb. We had one old hypocrite of a cow that should really have been classed as a marine animal. A sponge was not in it with her for absorbing water. She was an aquarium on four legs, a fish in disguise, and the fins were all on the inside concealed. She would lap up pail after pail of water

in the most innocent manner and look at me, perspiring and mad, and wink her eye at me as though it were a joke when it was no joke. She should have been stationed at the Roosevelt Dam, but that was before the time of that Dam. I personally assigned her all the other Dams I knew.

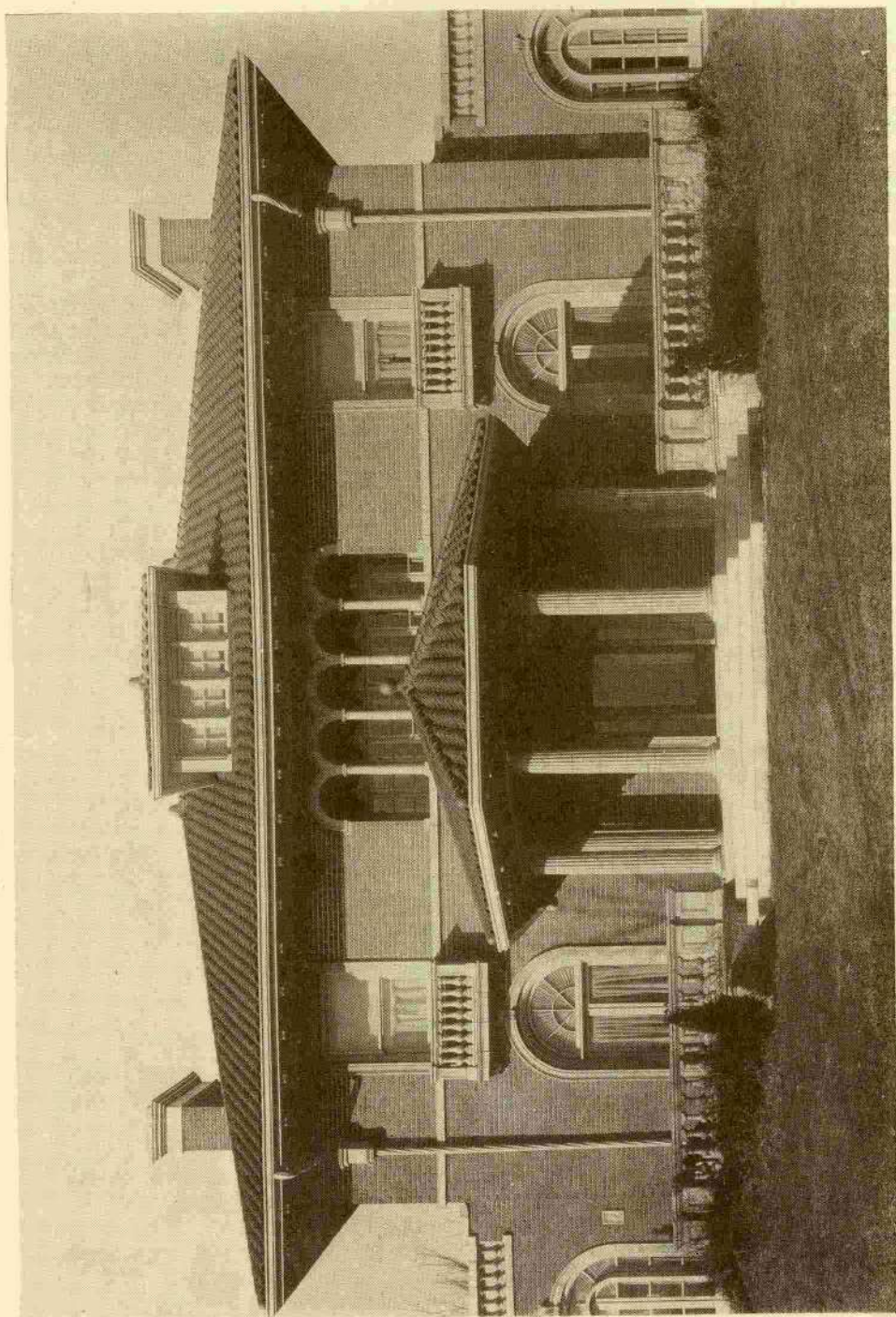


Artistic tendencies were really little considered at that time and why my father should have thought that I had talent for painting I know not but he did and, entirely of his own accord went personally and selected the brushes and paints, and then conducted the whole assortment, with myself attached, to the picket fence that surrounded our lot. It was said that there were five acres in that lot but, believe me, there were many more achers around it from that time on. He remarked casually that he was satisfied that I had talent in that line and that it was up to me to fulfill. I remember distinctly his saying that it would

fill in and take care of my leisure moments, whatever he may have meant by that, for it seemed to me that I had never personally possessed any of that particular kind of moment.

Before I got around the lot the paint had weathered off the place where I had started, there appeared to be no place to stop, and the project appeared to be a life work, a life sentence. Then, as I spread the paint on thick and thin, "Bunty" would drift by exhibiting the sign of the "Two Fingers" on his way to the swim. He was the only true representative of the leisure class that our town possessed, his widowed mother exercised no control over him, he never did anything he did not want to, never attended school, could neither read nor write and gave himself up to hunting and fishing and was the envy of us all.





JOHN J. MADDEN RESIDENCE, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.  
HERBERT FOLTZ, ARCHITECT



## THE NEW COMPETITION

THE reason for this page will be found in the narration of two incidents. We were in the smoker on the Century, half dozing, half dreaming, when we suddenly became interested in the general conversation. After settling the affairs of the Nation, a small matter which must always be disposed of in the smoker, the subject matter veered to business methods—

past vs. present.

The old fellow in the corner hadn't contributed to the discussion, but during a lull while the leaders were catching their breath, he drawled: "The best part of the so-called new business is the kind of competition a man gets now-a-days. In the old days I used to call my competitors my friends, but they weren't. They were the kind of friends Bierce had in mind when he said, 'While your friend holds you affectionately by both hands, you are safe, for then you can watch his.' Today I know that they are my friends, and I don't care whether I can see their hands or not. Competition is just as keen as it ever was but it isn't the dirty mud-slinging ignorant competition of the old days. I have the finest bunch of competitors in the world." We agreed with him thoroughly except for one thing. He had the second-best bunch of competitors in the world; we are sure of that, because we happen to have the best ourselves.

The second incident happened the day we arrived home. An architect asked us to send him some photographs of bank interiors. We sent him a set, writing him that we considered that particular interior the best that had been done recently. The next day he came in. "Those photographs were bully," he said, "but what's the grand little idea? That's one of your com-

petitors jobs." "We know it," said we, "didn't we write you who did the work, and didn't we write our competitor's name in large type on the back of the photos?" "You did, but I didn't think that any Terra Cotta Company on earth would admit that a competitor's job was one of the best jobs ever done, especially to an architect with a job to let." We answered, "let us tell you

something, friend architect. If we didn't believe that we could do as good a job as that we would lack the courage to continue work. But it happened that the opportunity came to our friends, not

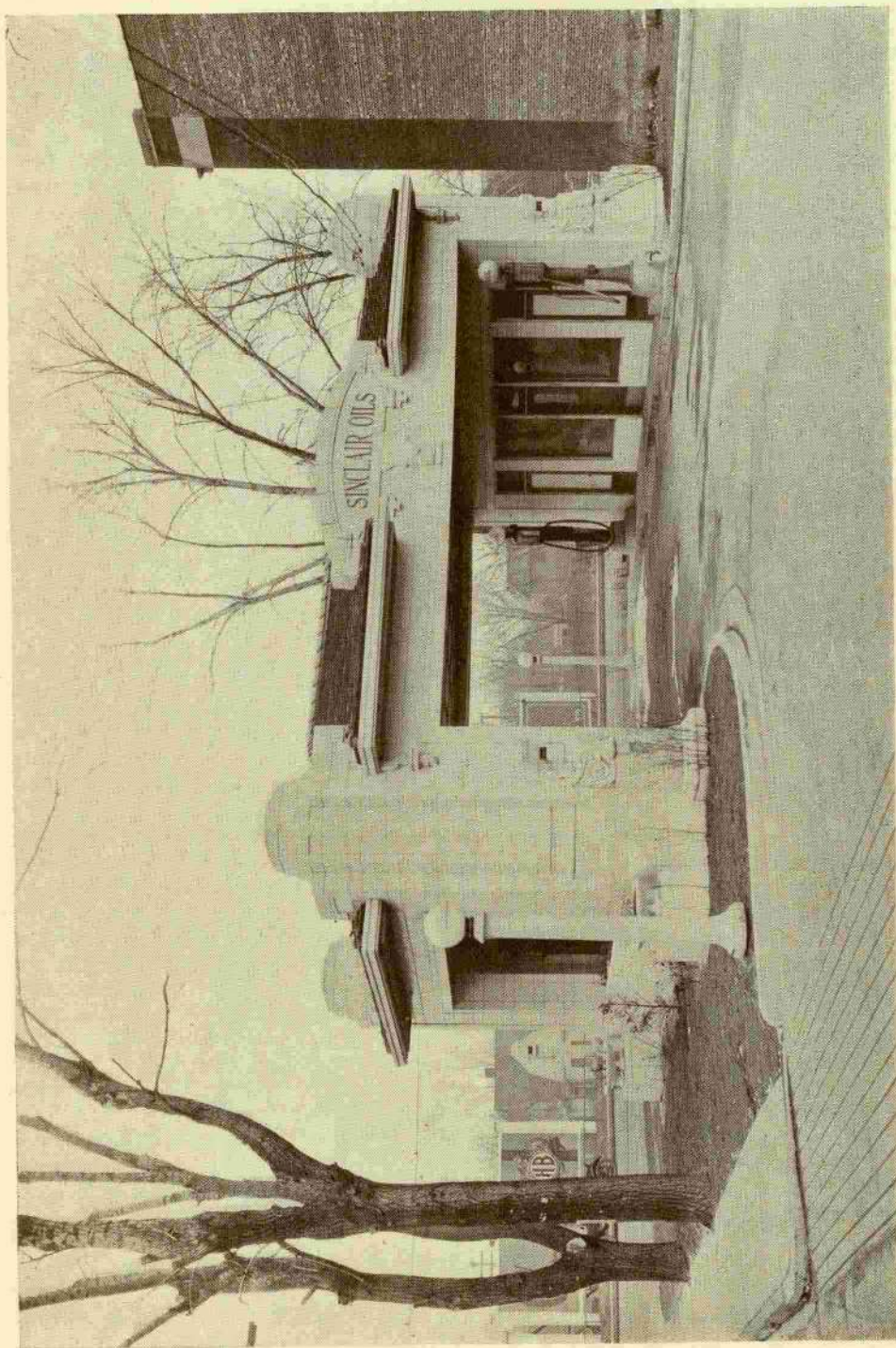
to us. Why should we, enthusiastic in the possibility of our material, shut our eyes to a magnificent example of the fine use of that material simply because the opportunity to express that use came to an honorable competitor, who has no objection to publicity even if it comes thru the efforts of another company?"

We reiterate, for we have so expressed ourselves many times, we are going to get our full share of the Terra Cotta business of this country. We have faith enough in our competitors to know that they are going to give us a good fight for this business and that they, also, are going to get just that share as they deserve. If any representative of this house should so far forget himself and his training as to insinuate that our competitors are anything but honorable gentlemen, fully able to carry out any contract that they might make with you, he is not representing us nor this house. We fear no honest intelligent competition. There are no manufacturers in the country more sincere and honest in dealing with the public than the members of the National Terra Cotta Society. The old man in the train had the second-best bunch of competitors,

*The men of my own stock,  
Bitter bad they may be,  
But, at least, they hear the things I hear,  
And see the things I see;  
And whatever I think of them and their likes,  
Why they think of the likes of me.*

RUDYARD KIPLING





SINCLAIR FILLING STATION, OMAHA, NEB.  
C. K. BIRDSALL, ARCHITECT



## ESTIMATE VS. GUESSTIMATE

AS we have told you many times before, Terra Cotta is a made-to-order material, and every job must be subjected to the machinery of the quantity surveying department before a price can be quoted. We quote two kinds of prices. One is based on what is known as an estimate; the other is based on what we facetiously call a "Guesstimate" and the word is self-explanatory. Whether you get an estimate or a guesstimate depends on you alone. We dread a quotation based on the guesstimate, and if you knew as much about the matter as we do, you would certainly shudder when you receive one.

With the present system of quantity surveying and pricing, an estimate is very accurate. In asking you to provide us with the means of arriving at the cost of the material you desire to buy we are not asking any more than is due us and you. The data needed is not complex. All we wish to know is the size of each piece, the height, the length, and the depth; the color and finish required, and if there be ornament some fair indication of the design thereof. The language of architectural drawing is so

precise that there should be no difficulty in the expression of your desires. Inasmuch as sooner or later accurate sizes must be determined, why not determine them before requesting a price?

A guesstimate is a dangerous, contrivance. The quantity taker being human and not wishing to accept unfair responsibility if forced to guess, will guess largely enough to protect himself from adverse criticism. The man who prices the quantities, naturally fearing that the prospective purchaser doesn't know what he wants, is tempted to price the job high to protect his firm against the possibility of changes which cannot easily be proven. In the natural course of events, the man who invites the guesstimate is quoted too high a price. In that event someone must be hurt. If he buys the job he is hurt. If he doesn't buy the job, the industry loses. If we guess low we are hurt.

Then why should you ask for a guesstimate? Why not see to it that proper information is afforded when you ask us to quote you. Be fair to yourself and to us. Both of us will benefit thereby.



PEOPLES LIFE BUILDING, CHICAGO  
JAS. B. DIBELKA, ARCHITECT



## THE MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE



MR. B. SCOTT GOODWIN

SO much of our work has been built in the Minneapolis district, that about a year ago we opened an office in that city at 627 Plymouth Building and placed Mr. B. Scott Goodwin, whose picture we present above, in charge. This action is strictly in line with our doctrine of service to the consumer, and we are delighted to announce that the doctrine pays dividends. It is no longer necessary for the users of Terra Cotta anywhere in that vicinity to send their drawings to Chicago for a price. Mr. Goodwin is well equipped to quote you and advise you. His training in the Terra Cotta business has been long and thorough both in the office and in the factory. Not only is he there to quote you prices, but also to advise you on construction, render you service on details, and to do everything in his power to prove to you that in our vocab-

ulary "Service" means something. This office is for you. Use it and we guarantee that you will appreciate the value of this service.

The establishment of this branch was not the result of impulse. There was a touch of tomorrow influencing our action. We believe that the future holds great things in store for the great Northwest of which the Twin-Cities are the gateways. When the Northwest comes into her own we shall look back with pride on our small share in her development. With her forward march of Progress we shall keep step, and in her continued growth and prosperity we shall rejoice. We look forward with her, as we march forward with her, to the time—not so far distant—when her activities shall be commensurate with her destiny.





BROWN NATIONAL BANK, JACKSON, MINN.  
THE LYTTLE CO., ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS



## THE GREY DAWN OF THE MORNING AFTER

WHILE Agriculture is generally conceded to be the largest industry of the United States, yet the Construction Industry is nearly as large and in the opinion of many economists, it is far more important to the industrial development of the country. It is practically the only industry which adds to the taxable wealth of the country. After every year of normal construction the wealth of the country has been increased more than three billions of dollars, while the product of the Agricultural industry has been consumed. So important is the Construction industry to the welfare of the country, one is justified in the assertion,—“As goes the Construction Industry, so goes the country”. This great industry, in common with the whole world, has fallen into evil days. It is practically at a standstill. So serious is the situation that many important conferences both local and National have been held with a view to a diagnosis of the problem and to prescribe the remedy or remedies necessary, for the restoration of normalcy.

The problem of the diagnosticians was complicated only by a hazy interpretation of the law of Supply and Demand. At first glance it appeared as if the old law were suspended; but clearer vision demonstrated that while the need for building was great, the demand was not. “Need” must not be confused with “Demand”. It was very evident that the reason why the demand did not keep pace with the need was the lack of confidence by the buying public in the stability of prices quoted by the building industry. It seemed to be true that the public considered that the market for building materials was a declining market, and until they were convinced that quoted prices were fair, honest, and subject to little fluctuation, the industry could look for very little improvement. If this diagnosis be correct the remedies are not far to seek. If prices are too high they must be brought to the proper pitch and the

buying public must be convinced that a stable level of prices had been reached. If prices can not be lowered, the buying public must through sincere publicity be convinced that the present level of prices is stable and will not be materially lowered.

We are of the opinion that in general the prices quoted for building material today cannot be materially lowered. It is necessary in speaking of the great industry as a whole to make the statement in this guarded way; but speaking of our own small share of the industry we can be much more definite and frankly announce that we see no possibility of a further reduction in prices, and we gladly publish our reasons for this conclusion.

The return to normalcy so much to be desired is, in the minds of many, confused with the idea of a return to 1914 prices. Normalcy in 1914 comprehended a far different level of prices and values than could be hoped for in 1921. Much bloody water has run under the bridge since that fortunate period of peace. Even had the war not intervened the level of 1914 could not govern today. For a decade before 1914 prices had been steadily increasing due largely to the commendable betterment of the standards of living. Had the world run along on an even keel since that time, the natural increase of the cost of construction would have been at least 35% greater than in 1914. Consequently the normalcy of 1921 represents a legitimate increase of 35%.

But the war *did* intervene. War may change maps but it cannot change economic laws. War may be waged with holy fervor for the right and holiness, but the powers of right and holiness will not pay the bills. The people must pay the bills, not only for the legitimate expenses but also for the economic errors before the war, during the war, and after the war. There is no sovereign remedy for the payment of debts, except to pay them. The construction industry being the largest indus-



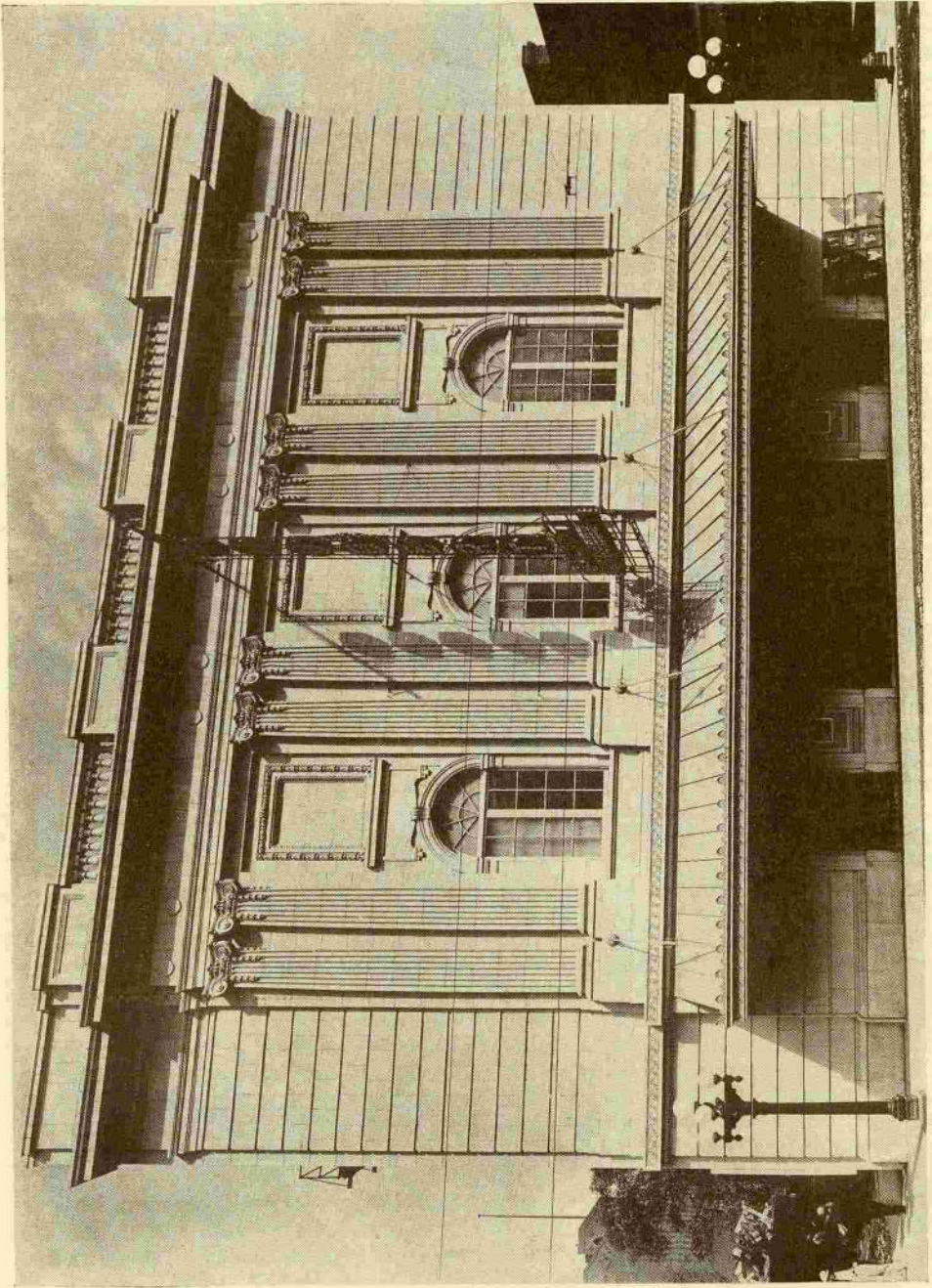
try in the country producing economic wealth must pay the larger portion of this enormous debt. A hasty glance at the size of the bills to be met will convince anyone that a return to pre-war prices is impossible. 1917 was the first year in the history of the country that the ordinary disbursements of the government reached a billion dollars. Today the interest on the public debt alone is in excess of a billion dollars. In 1914 the ordinary disbursements of the government were \$700,254,490.00. In 1920 they were \$6,141,745,240, an increase of approximately 875%. Up to March 1 of this year, a period of two thirds of the fiscal year they were \$3,247,295,635, an increase of over 700% over 1914. These figures do not include the expenditures of the Post Office department which have increased over one hundred millions per year over the expenditures of 1914. The cost of carrying this burden and for the payment of these debts must be added to the pre-war cost of construction. No fairy hand can wave away the responsibility. We fought the war idealistically, we won it victoriously, and today, in the grey dawn of the morning after, we must pay the bill—inevitably.

The burdensome additions to the cost of construction already noted are to be added before we come to the matter of actual construction; but the burden imposed by them is evident in every phase of cost items. The cost of transportation of building materials has increased over three billions of dollars over the costs of 1914. The government has set the price of rail-road labor; they have set the price the rail-roads must charge for their services. Building material men must pay these increased charges and there is no relief in sight. The price of money with which to do business has practically doubled, and due to the influence of tax-empt securities now flooding the market the amount of money available for construction enterprise must inevitably be small, invoking the law of supply and demand to the detriment of construction production and unavoidable increased costs.

It is evident that the increased costs before mentioned are entirely uncontrolled by the construction industry. The coming year holds out no hope for relief. If relief comes at all it must come from that source over which the government does not at present exercise control,—Labor. There are two broad classes of labor, organized and unorganized labor. Both classes must help to bear their full share of the increased costs already outlined. The cost of living cannot approach pre-war prices. Then neither can the cost of labor. Organized labor will resent any large decrease in rates in so vigorous a manner that should they win or lose, the cost of the battle would more than offset the small decrease in construction costs. Unorganized labor will so resent any material decreases in rates that they, too, will protest with any weapon ready to their hand any attempt to force a greater burden on their shoulders than they already bear. Such reduction of wages that labor can stand has already been put into effect by the lack of employment. There has been a steady increase in the productivity of labor due to the same lamentable cause, but who is there who can say that this increased activity of production would be steadily maintained in the face of increasing demand for production.

Look at the matter squarely. Study the fundamentals. The fixed charges of business activities, taxes, transportation, fuel, raw materials, finance and labor show absolutely no tendency to cheapen; on the other hand, if there be any change at all, increased activity of business will tend to increase charges. If labor, being hungry, is forced lower than a fair wage, labor, being fed, will regain the loss at the first opportunity. The construction industry, big as it is, is not big enough to fix the price at which their products can be sold. That has been fixed by a higher law; and as it is fixed, so it will and must remain. This is the grey dawn of the morning after, and we must face the facts as they are.





SHUBERT THEATRE, MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.



# TERRA COTTA OF YESTERDAY



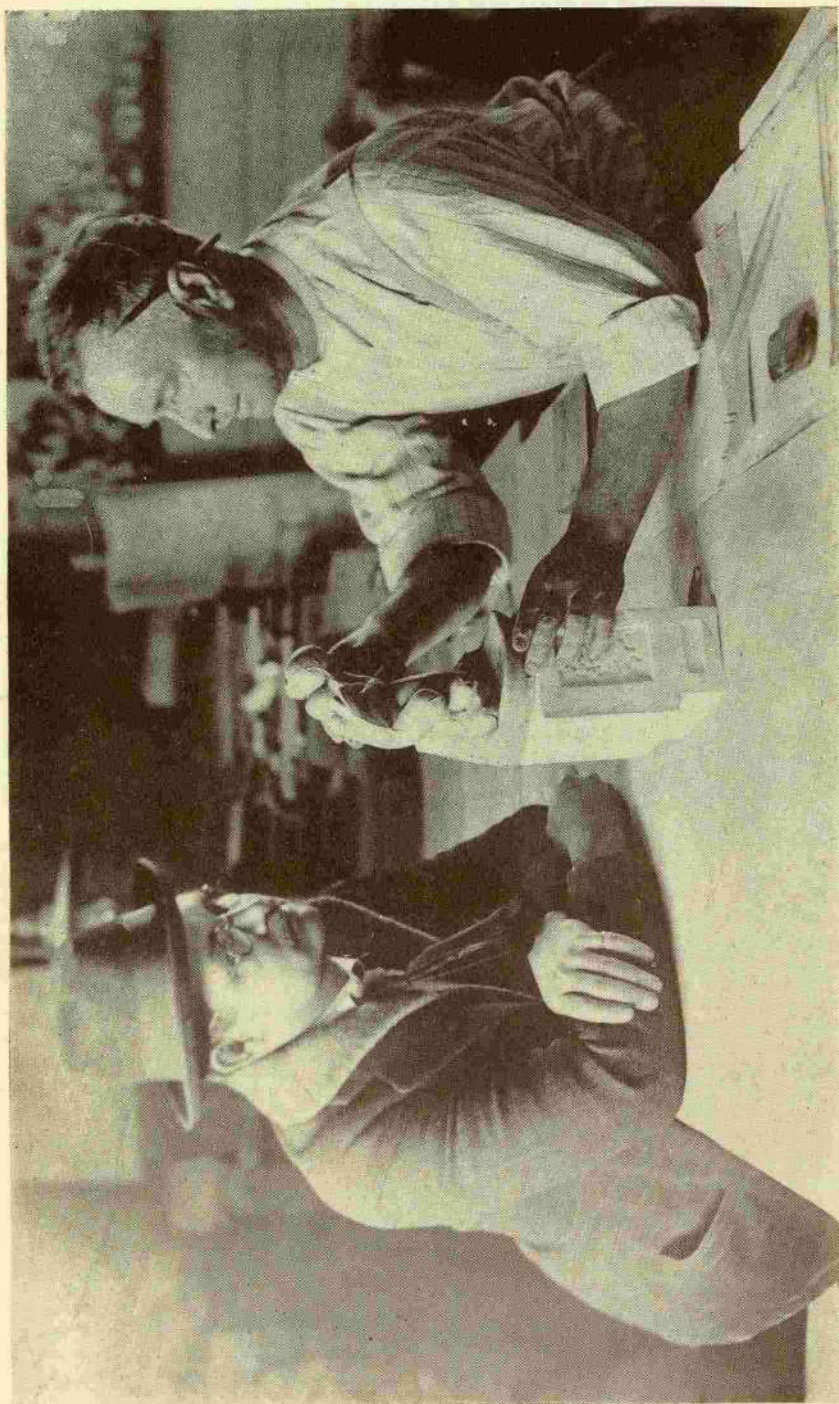
OLDEST PORTRAIT IN THE WORLD

THE University Museum Nippur collection at Philadelphia is rich in material interesting to the clay worker. Dr. Leon Legrain in an article in the Museum Journal describes the piece pictured above. This small tablet (the illustration above is two and one quarter times larger than the original) was made at least two hundred years before Abraham was the leader of Israel. It is a part of a larger piece which was used as a postage stamp and address tag for a basket of gold shipped from the temple of Ur to the shrine of the god Enlil at Nippur. The picture is that of Ibi-Sin, King of Ur, in the act of presenting a vase filled with precious ointment to the high priest, and is supposed to be the oldest protrait in

existence. It is more than four thousand years old.

The impression was undoubtedly made from a die which was a masterpiece of the art of the engraver. It was cut, according to the belief of experts, in some hard material, such as onyx, agate or lapis lazuli, for those materials were extensively used by the engravers of that time. The impression was made on the prepared clay and then baked so hard that it has resisted all of the onslaughts of time. We regret that learned men have not seen fit to translate the inscriptions that the clay worker of ages ago burnt for our benefit, but we assure them of our appreciation of their wisdom which makes it possible for us to tell you as much about it as we have done.





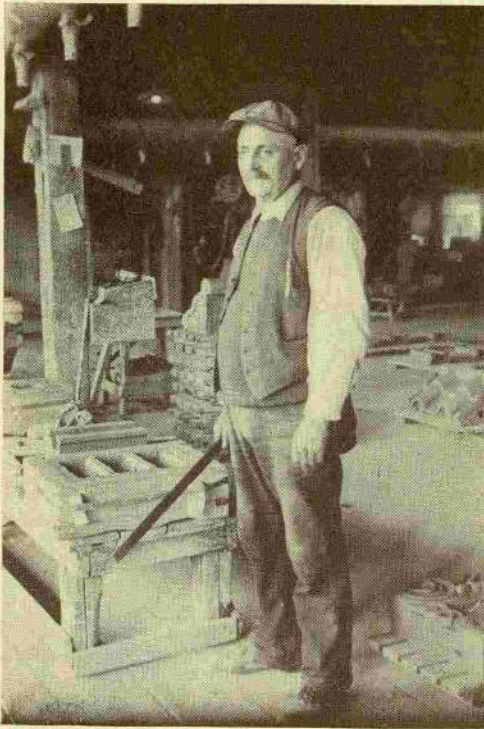
A FACTORY SNAPSHOT

THIS snapshot pleased us so much that we are willing to share it with you. The factory photographer was fortunate enough to see these two men working together and caught them in a very happy manner.

Of course you know them. Mr. M.E. Gates, our assistant general manager, and the inventor of "Pulsichrome," is on the left, and Mr. Schneider, our well known modeler is on the right.



## WHO'S WHO IN THE AMERICAN TERRA COTTA CO.



FRED ROSE

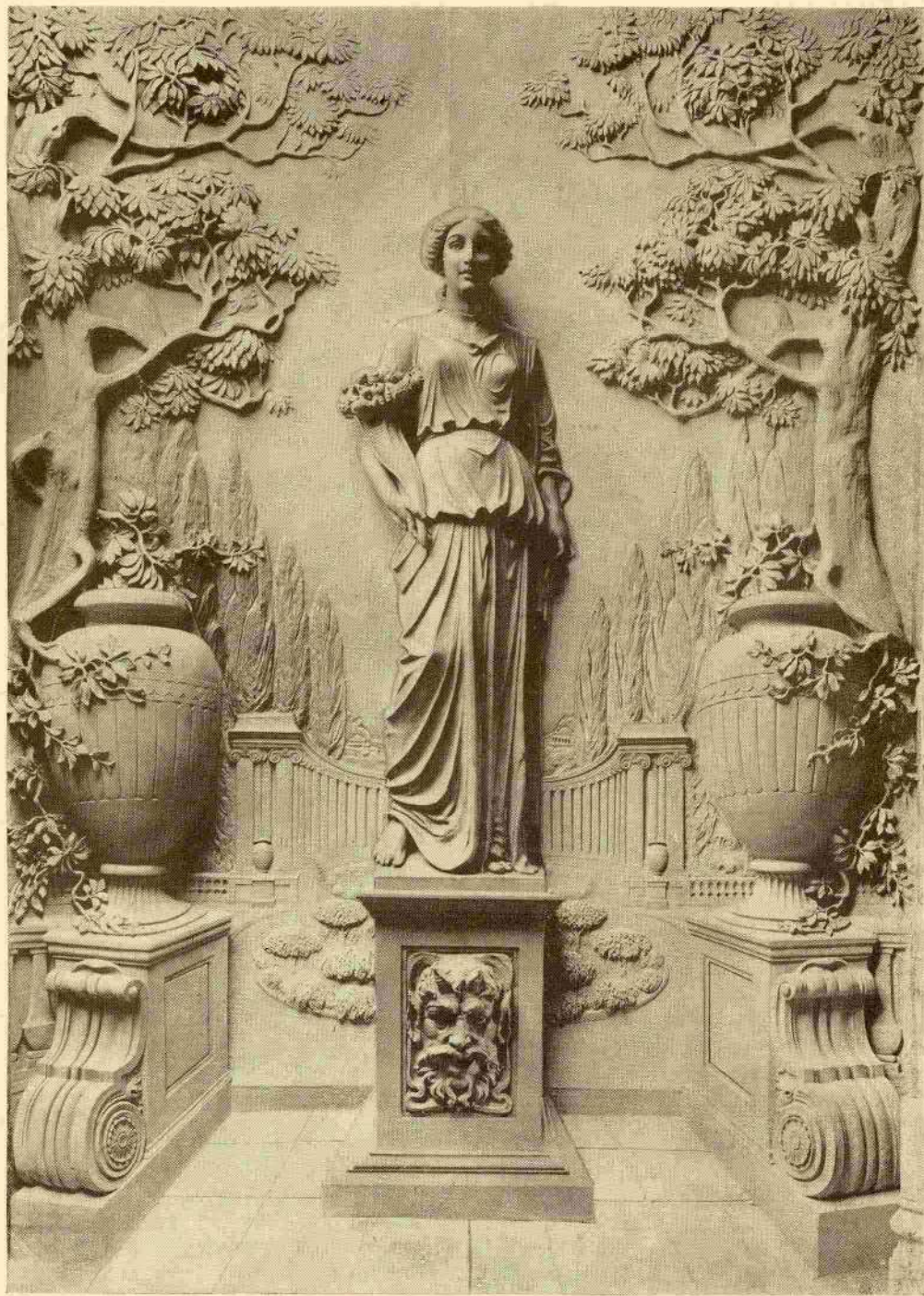
FRED came to work with us in 1891, thirty years ago, as an apprentice pressor. Today he is the foreman pressor on the second floor, and he knows as much about pressing as can be learned in thirty years of constant work. That amount of experience should be enough to insure the best of work, and it does. The job of a foreman pressor is no sinecure. It requires careful attention and steady application. A good clay body can be spoiled by poor pressing. All the efforts to give the piece a good creamic finish are unavailing unless the surface finish is as it should be. Fred is responsible for good pressing and welcomes that responsibility. When a man knows his job backwards and forwards, responsibility and he are good friends.



OTTO SCHWARZ

MR. SCHWARZ started in with us in September 1889, nearly thirty-two years ago. We hope that we do not weary you with our constant reference to length of service. We are proud of these "old-timers" and justly so. We believe that there is nothing so broadly indicative of the character of an institution as the length of time good men are willing to work with it. Mr. Schwarz is in charge of the slipping room where the ceramic finishes are applied, and also of the Kiln loading and unloading. It's a man size job with scattered activities. When the ware reaches Mr. Schwarz it is in that condition when it requires handling with the greatest of care. To make matters more difficult it must be handled many times. But the job is well done.





DETAIL OF NICHE—WOODS THEATRE, CHICAGO  
MARSHALL & FOX, ARCHITECTS





DESIGN FOR FOUNTAIN  
MODELED BY K. SCHNEIDER



*Ever insurgent let me be,  
Make me more daring than devout;  
From sleek contentment keep me free,  
And fill me with a buoyant doubt.*

*From compromise and things half done  
Keep me, with stern and stubborn pride;  
And when, at last, the fight is won  
God, keep me still unsatisfied.*

LOUIS UNTERMAYER