

JANUARY · FEBRUARY  
1922

*The world stands out on either side  
No wider than the heart is wide;  
Above the world is stretched the sky,—  
No higher than the soul is high.  
The heart can push the sea and land  
Farther away on either hand;  
The soul can split the sky in two  
And let the face of God shine through;  
But East and West will pinch the heart  
That cannot keep them pushed apart;  
And he whose soul is flat—the sky  
Will cave in on him by and by.*

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY



TIME has coursed around once more to the season of good wishes for others and resolutions aimed at the betterment of the world and ourselves. To you and yours we wish the happiest of all New Years; from the bottom of our hearts we beg the Gods of Chance to give you the breaks of the game;—the rest is up to you. Except for this,—that where our trails run together we assure you that the full extent of our powers shall be devoted to make that part of your New Year happy, prosperous and full of the joy of living.

The humorist, though his attack has been well sustained and heavy, has not yet weakened our faith in good resolutions. So, like the bird in the insert, we lift our right hand and forthwith resolve:

That we face the coming year with optimism and courage, purging our memory of the evil things of the past, treasuring in our memory only those happenings of the past which will help us to better the future.

That every individual in this institution from the new-comer to the old-timer, from the messenger to the President, must dedicate himself anew to the God of Service; that the doctrine of the poet, though doubtless true and beautifully expressed,—“He also serves who only stands and waits”, was not written of the Terra Cotta business; that our idea of Service is the expression of eternal and everlasting alertness

for the welfare of the customer, wasting as little energy as possible on the welfare of this firm. If our clients are well served, this organization will take its chances of being well served.

That, although we were proud of our product last year, we shall not be proud of it this year unless it is better

than it was last year. It must be as good as its name, “American” Terra Cotta must mean that it is a step and a half in front of the rest,—always.

So our resolutions come to this: that in the coming year we are going to do more business with you than ever, — more business and better business, — greatly to your profit, and a little to ours. Our right hand is up and we shall keep the faith.

Quality, like costs, never stands still. It goes either up or down. We are determined that the quality of our ware shall have, like Time, only one direction—the onward movement. That’s our job—but moving forward with our quality drive, in lock-step with it, should go the betterment of architectural design. That’s your job. If our duty is to express your ideas in burnt clay, it is clearly your duty, to yourselves and your clients, when you design for Terra Cotta that you think in terms of Terra Cotta; that you design for plastic clay rather than for inert materials. If your design is worth anything it is worth adequate and logical expression. Let us go forward together.



DETAIL, DESCHLER HOTEL, COLUMBUS, OHIO  
HOLABIRD & ROCHE, ARCHITECTS



*Published by*

THE AMERICAN TERRA COTTA & CERAMIC CO.

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## EDITORIAL

MUCH to our regret "Common Clay" has not been published since last August. There were many reasons why this interlude of non-publication was advisable. In considering the matter of a temporary suspension many arguments pro and con were presented; but the one which threw the balance in favor of the action taken was that "Common Clay," as always, should lead the way, setting a good example for the rest of this organization of which we are so justly proud.

Our artist friends have told us that all things can be expressed in terms of color. The totality of truth in this assertion we are not disposed to admit; but, this we know, 1921 was a blue, blue year. The only good thing we heard about it from the business point of view was that it rewarded fighters. It did—but not much. The first six months rewarded our fighting sales force enough to prove the wisdom of the slogan but not enough, nor steadily enough, to satisfy the needs of our factory. In common with other manufacturers, unless the constant demands of the demon "Adequate Production" be steadily fed, we suffer promptly from the speedy results of the curse of rising costs inflicted by that unrelentless demon. Good excuses, unanswerable business logic, were of no avail. Costs were mounting—prices going down. The rosy red color of 1920 was just changing into the deep cold blue of 1921. We were faced with the solution of a world-wide problem. If an irresistible force meets with an immovable body, what is the result? The professors tell us that the inevitable result

would be an interesting amount of by-products. There were.

The Board of Directors met, scratched their fast-thinning locks, and deliberated. Things were going badly—unquestionably. The only answer in sight was—cut expenses. But where? Surely not to the detriment of the product. That was unthinkable. Better go out with flying colors, the quality of the product undiminished, than to swerve one iota from the quality programme. Then "Common Clay," leading the way, sacrificed four issues to the common cause. Quickly following suit, the executive and administrative forces sacrificed a large portion of their income. Cutting wages is bad business, but a careful survey showed that the men at the factory were with us to the finish;—and they, too, added their mite. The sales force doubled their efforts, and the old insatiable demon of Adequate Production was sent sulking to his corner. But the fight is still on. It is no six-round no-decision affair under the laws of a boxing commission. It is a fight to the finish with only one rule—the quality of the product must not be lowered.

We look to you for such assistance as you think our cause should merit. We shall be glad to accept any help you can give us, except three cheers. Your moral support will help us psychologically, but your material support will help us financially—where support is really needed. We can show you one hundred letters praising us for the quality of service and product to one which can give the welcome instructions to proceed with the manufacture of a new





COLUMBIAN COLORTYPE CO. ENTRANCE, CHICAGO, ILL.  
A. S. ALSCHULER, ARCHITECT



## "WHAT'S ALL THE SHOOTIN' ABOUT?"

THE average business man in summing up his experiences during the past year, searching for some clue to guide him during the coming year, finds himself in dire straits. There is no clue. Much worse is the position of the manufacturer of building materials. He is a co-heir to the same troubles as beset the average business man—plus a few. He finds himself in a blind alley and upon retracing his footsteps discovers that some malevolent agency has walled up the path by which he entered. The only course left to him is to pull himself up by his boot-straps. Uncle Daniel Boone's position, as explained in the insert, was easy compared with

*Daniel Boone used to boast of his ability to find his way back through trackless wilderness he had traversed. A youngster once put the question point-blank: "Uncle Daniel, did you ever get lost in the woods?" "No, no, my son," came the answer, "but once I was considerably bewildered for goin' on five days."*

ours at the present moment. Like him, we refuse to admit that we are lost—we are only a trifle bewildered, but, sub rosa, we are praying to heaven that the boot-straps will stand the strain to which they are going to be subjected.

It has been well said that the difference between the pessimist and the optimist is that the gloomy bird asks "Is there any milk in the pitcher" while the cheery guy demands—"Hand me the cream." We are going to emulate that cheery guy and loud, long and vociferous will be our cry for the cream. Don't you doubt for a single moment but that the cream will be forthcoming, but when it does come, there will be scars of a fearful struggle in its path.

You may well ask as did so often the character in the successful drama of the past year "What's all the shootin' about?" Nothing much—but if the office boy could point the way out, he's welcome to my job.

What *IS* all the shootin' about? Well—we'll bite and we'll tell you.

There are enough troubles running around to keep the average man busy. Loss on inventories, slow pay, falling

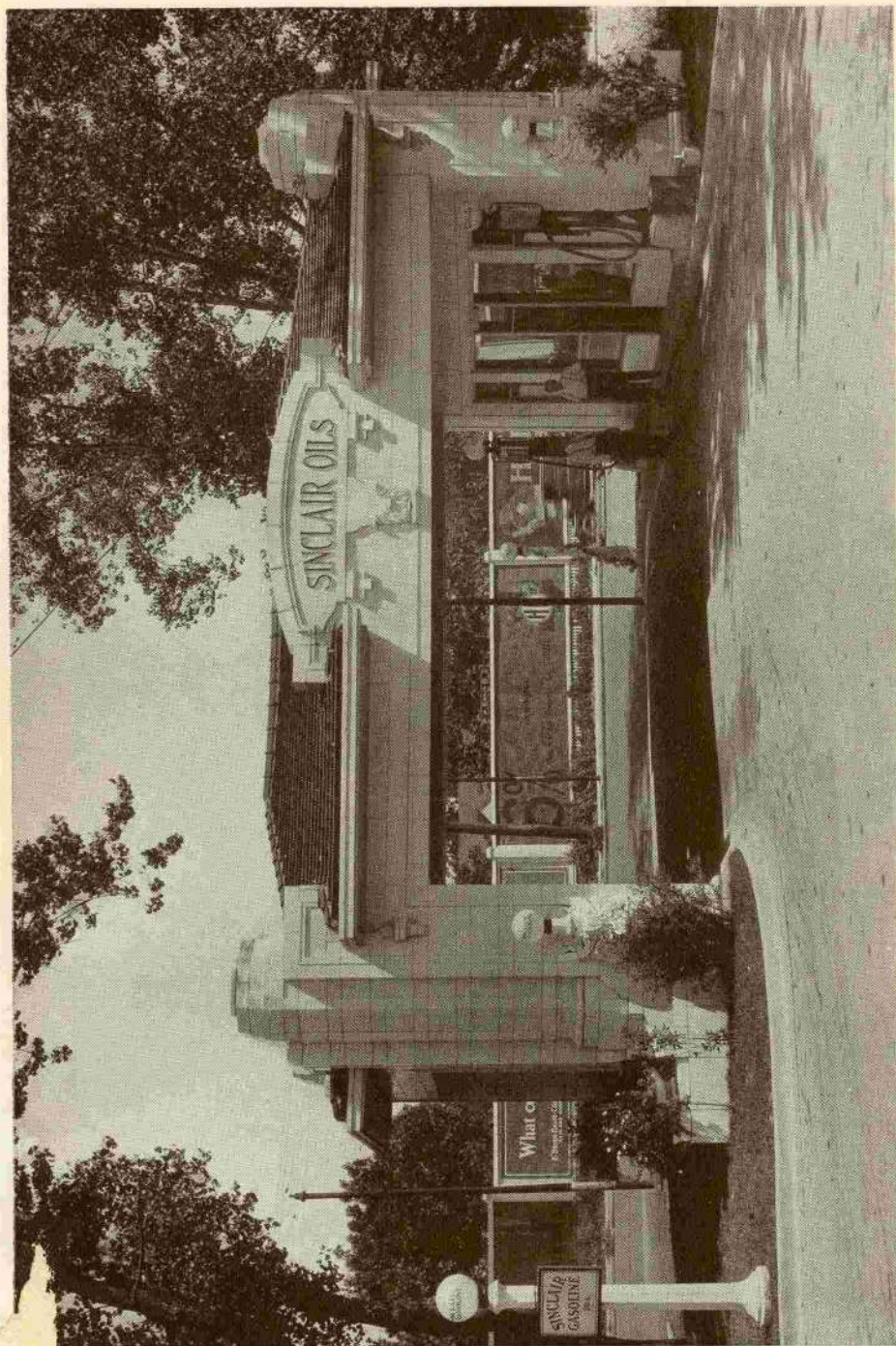
market, general unrest, the year's work thrown in the discard, foreign exchange, lawyers looking for a better living than we get,—and then some. Ask Henry Ford. He will tell you that it is the Jews—the gold standard—the war—the trusts—and so on ad infinitum. Ask the Republican Administration. They will tell you that we are paying the piper for having voted for Wilson. Ask the leading Democrats and they will tell you it serves you right for hav-

ing voted for Harding. Maybe so. We voted for both of them, so doubtless deserve all we are getting. Ask a philosopher and he will answer cryptically—"As a man soweth, so shall he also reap." Our answer to him is that we had every reason to believe that we sowed good seed—but an enemy came in the night and switched on us.

What are our particular troubles? Briefly, while building labor is well paid, the men who manufacture building material are content with much less—and are dependent for their activities upon the caprices of the building crafts. In the Chicago fight on the Landis award we are innocent bystanders who receive the brick on the head. In the government drive on the housing situation we are subjected to various stumbling blocks—and we have nothing whatsoever to do with the matter. In the outcry against high freight rates we take the cussing and pay the bills—both incoming and outgoing. We lost our organization during the war, being declared non-essentials, built one up during the business riot of 1920—hung on to it during the depression of 1921. Cheerio! We are going to get the business at a fair price, for you and for us; good business, profitable—profitable. 1922 is the year.

"What's all the shootin' about?"

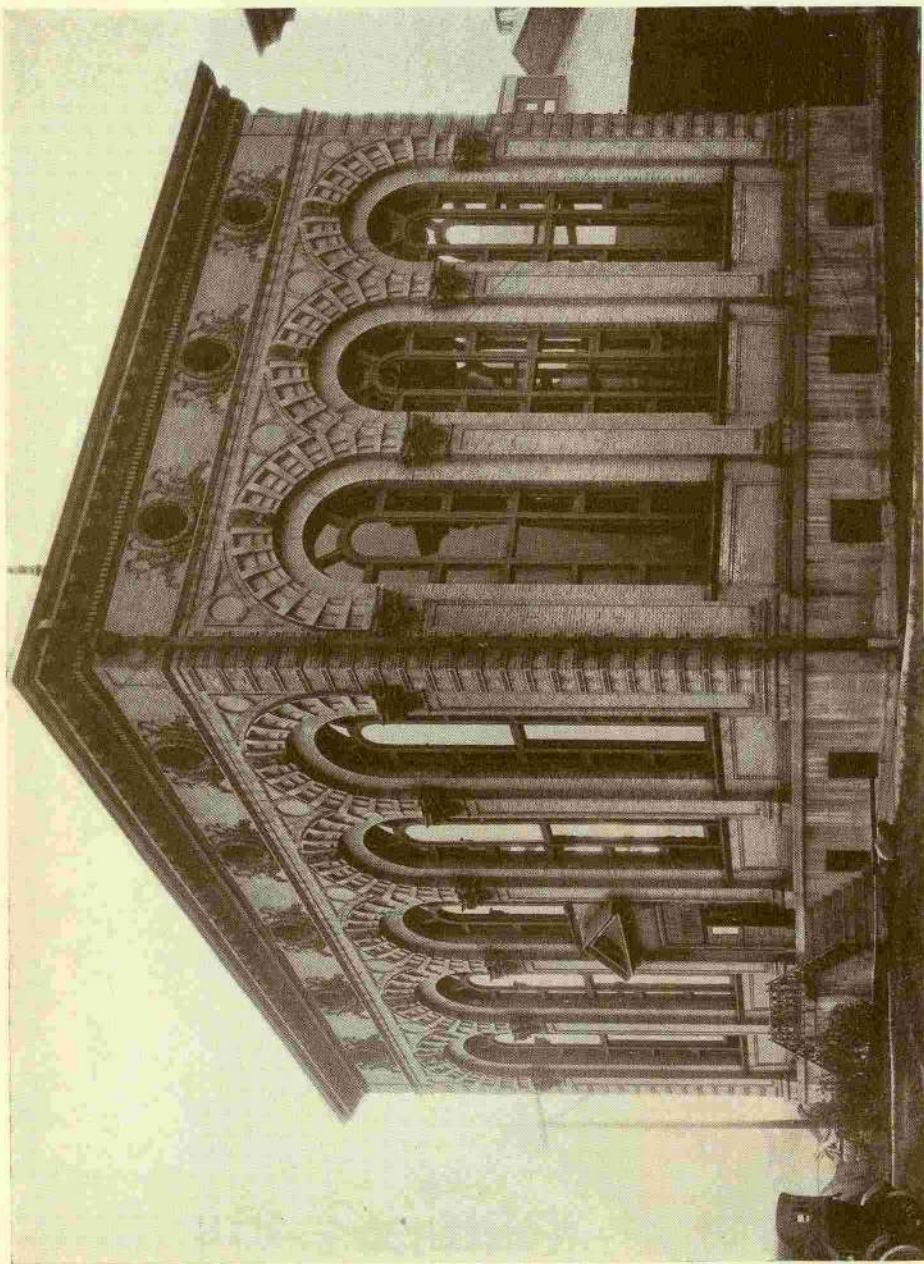




SINCLAIR SERVICE STATION, OMAHA, NEB.  
CLARENCE K. BIRDSALL, ARCHITECT



❖ COMMON CLAY ❖



PUMPING STATION, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.  
DAVIS COMPANY, ENGINEERS



## BUTTON HOLE TALKS

W. D. GATES, PRESIDENT

CHEMICALLY, clay may be defined as a mixture of Alumina and Silica, practically never occurring in a pure state, but containing more or less such substances as Lime, Magnesia, Soluble Salts and Metals in small degree. If absolutely pure it would always be in its well burned state, white. Its coloring agents are metallic. Physically, I should define it as a plastic mass, easily wrought into form, which, having been subjected to a sufficient heat, permanently loses its plasticity and becomes hard and imperishable.

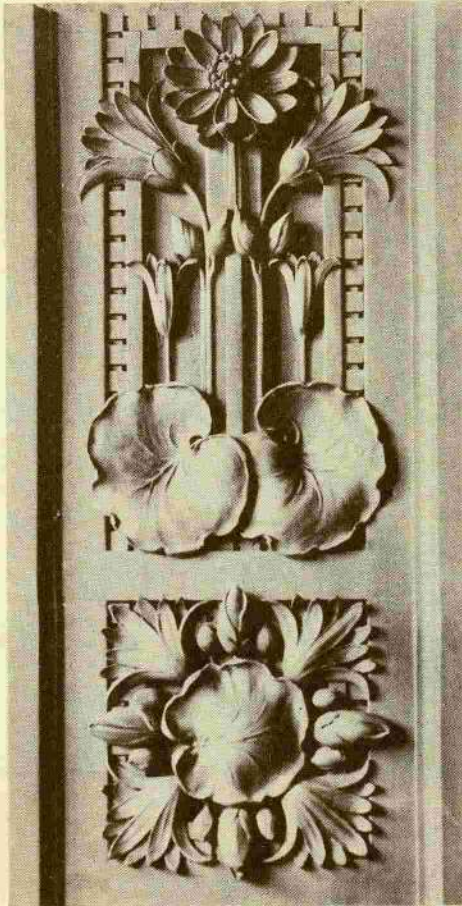
As just clay it is an inert mass and valueless, but when impressed with the Human Touch it takes on interest, holds it in every smallest detail, renders it imperishable, and thus becomes a thing of appreciation. It mixes well with Brains and when such proper admixture occurs the World is richer.

It is a marvelous medium for everlastingly holding the impress of human thought and art, for the use and benefit of all mankind, for their gratification and enjoyment. It is the most striking evidence of the action of "Mind on Matter" that occurs anywhere in Nature. In the one case you shun it, wipe it off your shoes, kick your way around it, and in the other you pay your way into a museum to look at some of it that is of priceless

value, because it has been mixed with brain and wrought out by a man of mind who worked into it his fancies.

Luca dela Robbia saw its possibilities

and proceeded to utilize them. He had been educated as a goldsmith, had great talent, was energetic, resourceful and daring. The use of clay appealed to him from the fact that he had always to use clay first as a medium in which to express his fancies and ideas and then wait to translate it into marble or bronze or worse yet, be forced to leave this translating into another material to others than himself. By this means his own, original work was lost and was replaced by that of the copyist. To remedy this he worked with the potter, thus utilizing the knowledge of the latter, and handed down to posterity his own original and individual work.



There is today in Italy, raw clay left adjoining the clay he used, just as good material as that used by him, which because it did not get his humanizing touch, now remains just the ordinary common despised material, while the clay which he took from beside it, and on which he impressed his personality, is today guarded in the world's best museums and held by mankind as a priceless treasure.



STRAND THEATRE, LANSING, MICH.



BY DAY

JOHN EBERSON is an architect whose address is Chicago but whose place of business is these United States of America. We have furnished terra cotta for him in Texas, Kansas, Indiana, Michigan, and far afield. You will perhaps note that we referred to his "place of business" rather than "the territory where he practices his profession." We used the words advisedly; John Ebersson not only practices the profession of Architecture in a skilled degree, but he is a good man of business and a man of good business. We have gone to him for a job. He gave it to us and we were glad.



## JOHN EBERSON, CHICAGO, Architect



BY NIGHT

We have gone to him for business advice. He gave it to us, much to our profit. Our testimony is that he is architect, business man and friend. What more would you?

This theatre at Lansing is very interesting. Polychrome pulsi-chrome was used; the background being a warm mottled combination and the plain colors forming the combination were used to relieve the ornament and background. This space is too limited to explain further but we are preparing in a future issue to show more of John Eberson's work.



## LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF CHARLES LOUNSBURY

"I CHARLES LOUNSBURY, being of sound mind and disposing memory, do hereby make and publish this, my last will and testament, in order as justly as may be to distribute my interest in the world among succeeding men.

"That part of my interest which is known in law and recognized in the sheep-bound volumes as my property, being inconsiderable and of no account, I make no disposal of in this, my will.

"My right to live, being but a life estate, is not at my disposal, but, these things excepted, all else in the world, I now proceed to devise and bequeath:—

*Charles Lounsbury was an inmate of the Cook County Asylum when he died. If this be insanity let's have less sanity. You have doubtless read this before, read it again.*

"Item: I give to good fathers and mothers, in trust for their children, all good little words of praise and encouragement, and all quaint pet names and endearments, and I charge said parents to use them justly and generously, as the needs of their children may require.

"Item: I leave to children inclusively, but only for the term of their childhood, all and every, the flowers of the fields, and the blossoms of the woods, with the right to play among them freely according to the customs of children, warning them at the same time against thistles and thorns. And I devise to children the banks of the brooks, and the golden sands beneath the waters thereof, and the odors of the willows that dip therein, and the white clouds that float high over the giant trees. And I leave to children the long, long days to be merry in, a thousand ways, and the night and the moon and the train of the Milky Way to wonder at, but subject nevertheless to the rights hereinafter given to lovers.

"Item: I devise to boys jointly all the useful idle fields and commons where ball may be played; all pleasant waters where one may swim; all snow-clad hills

where one may coast, and all streams and ponds where one may fish, or where, when grim winter comes, one may skate; to have and to hold the same for the period of their boyhood. And all meadows with the clover blossoms and butterflies thereof, the woods and their appurtenances, the squirrels and birds and the echoes and strange noises, and all distant places which may be visited, together with the adventures there found. And I give to said boys

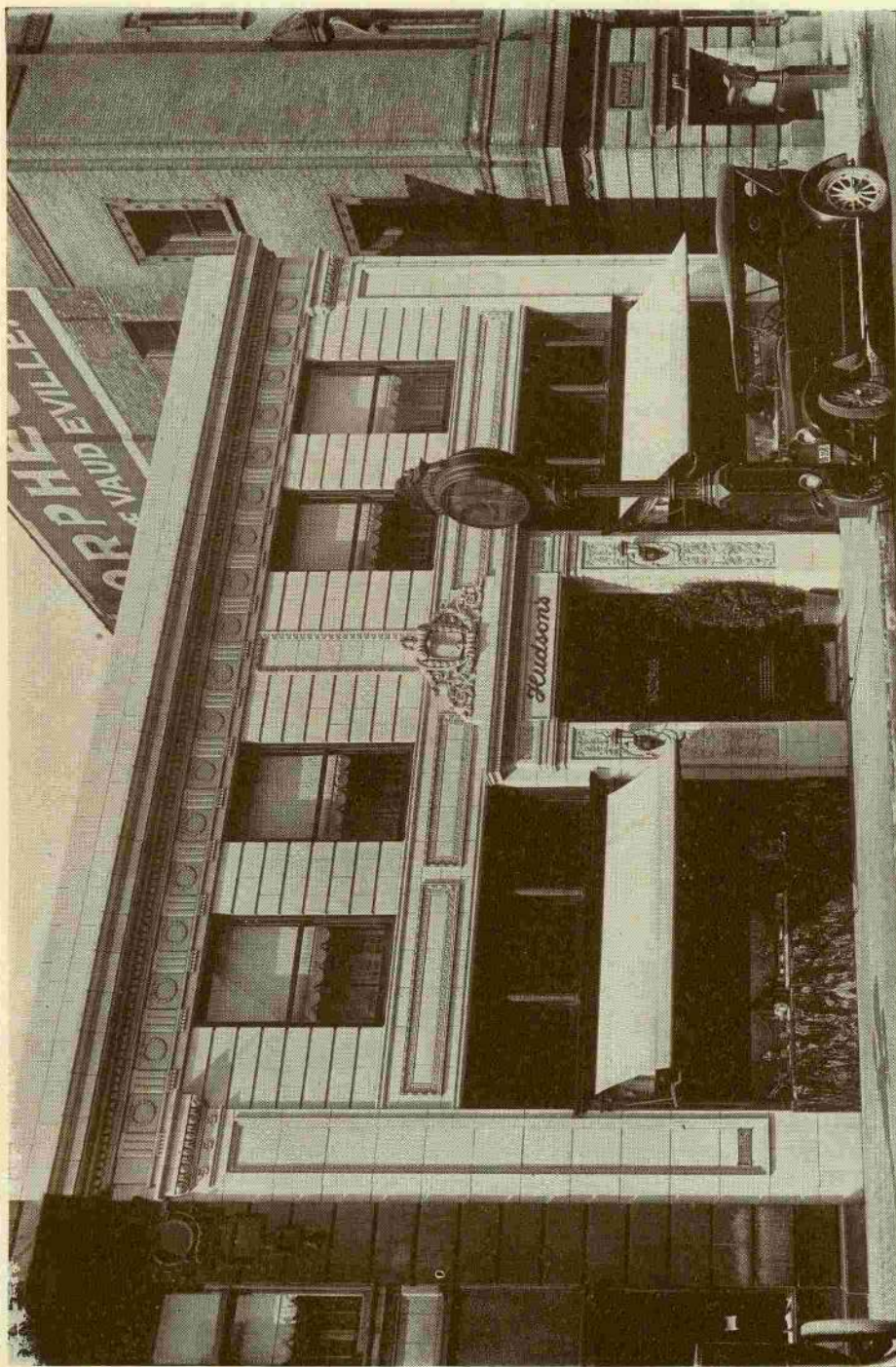
each his own place at the fireside at night, with all pictures that may be seen in the burning wood, to enjoy without let or hindrance and without any incumbrance of care.

"Item: To lovers I devise their imaginary world, with whatever they may need; as the stars of the sky, the red roses by the wall, the bloom of the hawthorn, the sweet strains of music and aught else by which they may desire to figure to each other the last-  
ingness and beauty of their love.

"Item: To young men jointly I devise and bequeath all boisterous, inspiring sports of rivalry, and I give to them the disdain of weakness and undaunted confidence in their own strength, though they are rude; I give them the power to make lasting friendships, and of possessing companions, and to them exclusively I give all merry songs and brave choruses, to sing with lusty voices. And to those who are no longer children or youths or lovers, I leave memory, and I bequeath to them the volumes of poems of Burns and Shakespeare and of other poets, if there be others, to the end that they may live over the old days again, freely and fully, without tithe or diminution.

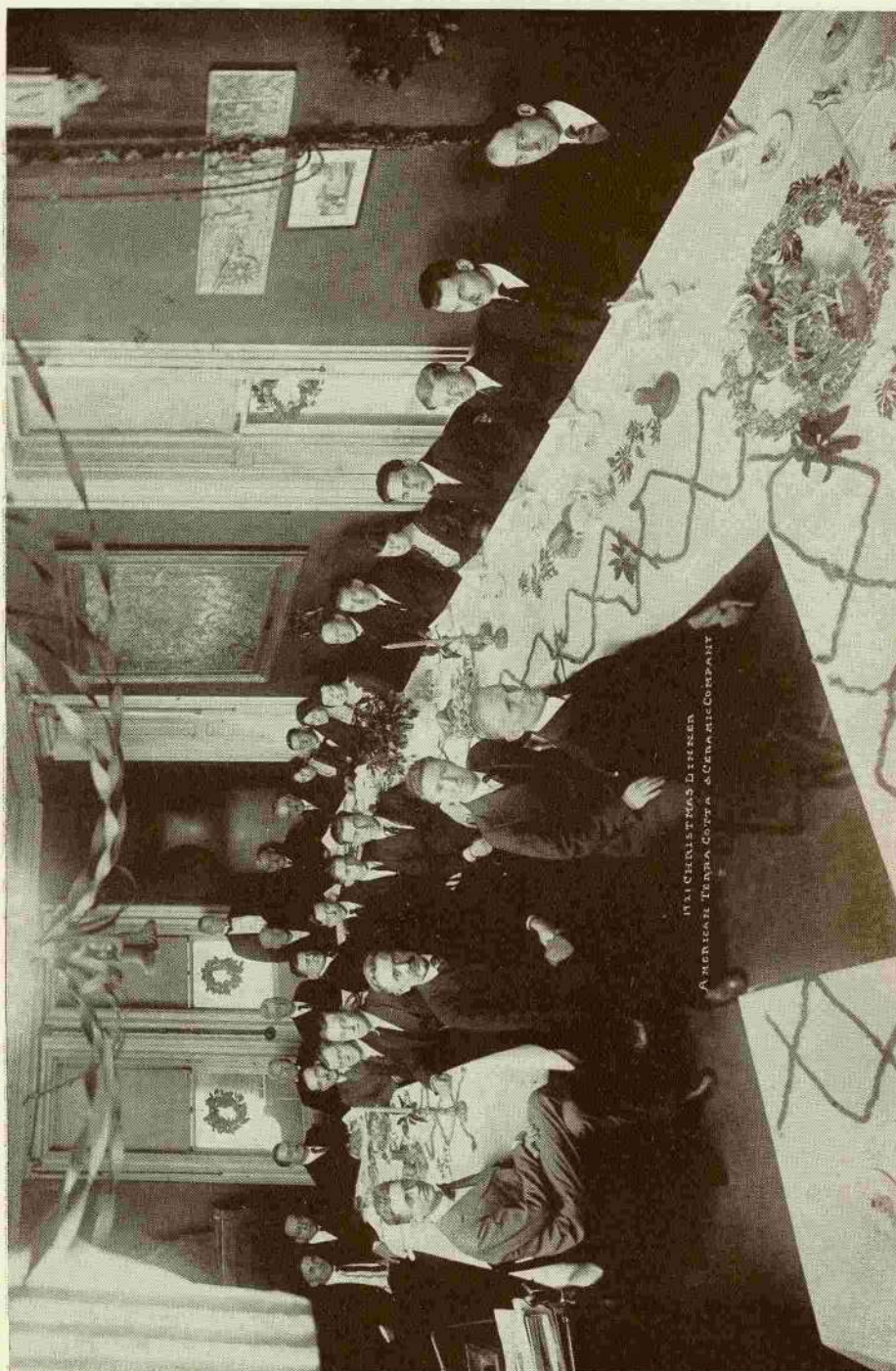
"Item: To our loved ones with snowy crowns I bequeath the happiness of old age, the love and gratitude of their children until they fall asleep."





*This building in our August issue was credited to Anton Jensen, Architect. We were in error and thus apologize. Kees & Colburn of Minneapolis were the architects for the work.*





IT'S CHRISTMAS DINNER  
AMERICAN TRUST CO. & GENERAL COMPANY

CHRISTMAS DINNER IN OUR OWN HOME  
CHICAGO OFFICE FORCE



## OUR BUSINESS FAMILY

SOME family, isn't it? We're rather proud of it. Good boys and girls,—all young in heart and spirit, no matter whether Father Time has checked their summers lightly or heavily; all one family working together for a common purpose.

We are very fortunate in having a home of our own. Tiring of the limited space afforded by Loop accommodations we went house-hunting and bought the Hibbard Residence at 1701 Prairie Ave., a large roomy home that once housed a happy home-family, whose sturdy citizenship, upright living, and material success exerted a large wholesome influence in the development of Chicago. The history of Chicago is brighter, cleaner, and better because of the family life of the Hibbards that this old house sheltered. We know very little about the immortality of the soul, but in our creed the immortality of influence is held to be very truth itself. If our house is haunted it is by the fairies of good influence and we have done our best not to frighten them away and to make them feel at home by observing the same good spirit of the family life to which this house was dedicated.

Once each day at noon a welcome bell tinkles and we gather around the unch table to feed our material being with the good things Mrs. Harris cooks for us, and to feed our hearts and brains with the good fellowship and good chat which is the inevitable result of comradeship. The seasons' festivals are rigidly observed. Thanksgiving Day rings its turkey and cranberry sauce, Christmas Day its holly and tree. The picture on the opposite page shows gathered for our annual Christmas celebration. The outstanding feature

of the program was the presentation of a silver loving cup to our President, Mr. W. D. Gates—a token of appreciation from all of our fellow-workmen. Then we ate and were glad; glad that the old year was nearly over; glad that a new year was coming; glad that we were together; glad that we had work to do, and glad that we knew how to do it.

You may well ask—What's this got to do with the terra cotta business? Considerable,—and then some. A

man's work is never quite as good as he is, but almost. The joint work of a body of men is never quite as good as the sincerity of their co-operation, but almost. Consequently in bettering the man, in bettering the co-

operation, we stand a fair chance to better the joint work. Comradeship is the essence of co-operation. Cement the comradeship and we insure the co-operation. Insure the co-operation and we insure the corporation with which you do business. That business stands a better chance of successful issue when the co-operation of our family is insured. When we have learned the lesson of the insert,—that "we are better than our clay and equal to the peaks of our desire" then things will begin to move and move right. We believe that we are on the right track; right for us and right for you.

There is always an extra plate at the table and we extend you a standing invitation to eat with us any day at noon sharp. Check us up on this to our mutual advantage.

There is nothing we enjoy more than the coming of the unexpected guest. We know that you will enjoy the lunch and the chat after lunch. Join the circle once, and you'll come again.!

*Let us go out and walk upon the road,  
And quit forever more the brick-built den.  
The lock and key, the hidden shy abode  
That separates us from our fellow-men.*

*And by contagion of the sun, we may  
Catch a spark from that primeval fire,  
And learn that we are better than our clay,  
And equal to the peaks of our desire.*

JAMES STEPHENS



## IF WORTH BUYING, IT'S WORTH ATTENTION

IT is decidedly curious, but it is a fact, that when one finds that one's troubles are not strictly individual, one breathes a little easier. You remember the apocryphal story of the sergeant who, hit in the shoulder, then in the arm, then in the leg, shook his fist in the direction of the enemy and shouted, "Take a shot at somebody else; I ain't the whole American Army." So when we are called to task for the abuses to which our material is subjected we feel for the sergeant. But along comes the Tyler outfit who make bronze doors and other things out of metal and register the same kick that we have. Unfortunately the remedy hinted at in their little monograph doesn't help us much. Our material can be made fool-proof; and, as far as the material is concerned, it is; but the application of the material in buildings is out of our control for the most part and that is where we are hurt. If the mason uses poor mortar and very little of that, if the flashing is not properly installed, if the owner does not periodically examine the pointing of the joints, our material is doomed to suffer. Water will destroy anything and everything in time. The old testament tells us that when the Creator desired to destroy the world, he used water. No material can successfully withstand its ravages. Keep the water out. Terra cotta surfaces are impervious to water. The joints are not. What's the answer? Look to the joints on your building! Watch the flashing around your parapet walls. Keep the water out.

Proper supervision at the time when your Terra Cotta is installed will save you grief. Make the mason set it as per specifications. We had a case not long ago where a piece of the cornice had fallen. The mason wrote us that

the piece had fallen down because the wire broke. Wire! We furnished that mason properly made steel lookouts and hangers. Instead of using them, he had tied his cornice up with telegraph wire! And he was naive enough to cuss Terra Cotta! We get our living from architects and masons but we desire no business with architects who permit such loose supervision to ruin our business; nor with masons whose conception of business is to save a dollar at the expense of people's lives. The owner who pays for supervision of his building should get it,—and we do not propose to permit our material to stand the blame because someone performed their duty

*"Without question, the hardest problem of the modern manufacturer is to get decent treatment for his product. Many have despaired of this and have devoted all their energy to the making of products that are almost impervious to abuse."*

W. S. TYLER CO.

badly. If the shirtmaker gives you a bad fit—do you blame the silk, trade, or the shirtmaker? If a brick parapet falls down—do you blame the brickmaker—or the mason? If a concrete span drops, do you cuss the cement man, or the concrete contractor? If a building settles, do you blame the steel manufacturer or the foundation expert? For the love of Mike, be reasonable!

There is one way in which you can insure yourself against improper installation,—let us do it. We have a force of setters who know their business and do their work well. It will cost you more money. Any mason can set Terra Cotta cheaper than we do. Why? Our men are picked men of experience who work better and faster than the average mason. Knowing their work experienced in adjusting anchors, knowing just where to look for setting marks skilled in joint adjustment, they can set Terra Cotta faster than the average mason,—for the same quality of work. We can set Terra Cotta as cheaply as the mason,—but we won't. The saving of a few dollars at installation more often than not brings later grief.





ENTRANCE, WILLIAMS BUILDING, CHICAGO  
A. S. ALSCHULER, ARCHITECT



*"A Good Name is Rather to be  
Chosen than Great Riches"*

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*"AMERICAN" TERRA COTTA  
is a Good Name*

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*The Material is as Good  
as Its Name*

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*Buy "AMERICAN" TERRA COTTA  
and You Buy the Best*



## Tablet Erected in Minneapolis Athletic Club



WITH GRATITUDE WE HAVE RECORDED  
HIS STORY ON IMPERISHABLE CLAY

*If what we fought for seems not worth the fighting,  
And if to win seems in the end to fail,  
Know that the vision lives beyond all blighting  
And every struggle rends another veil.*

*The tired hack, the cynic politician,  
Can dim, but cannot make us lose the goal,  
Time moves with measured step upon her mission,  
Knowing the slow mutations of the soul.*

HAMILTON FISK ARMSTRONG



*The law the lawyers know about  
Is property and land;  
But why the leaves are on the trees,  
And why the winds disturb the seas,  
Why honey is the food for bees,  
Why horses have such tender knees,  
Why winters come and rivers freeze,  
Why Faith is more than what one sees,  
And Hope survives the worst disease,  
And Charity is more than these,—  
They do not understand.*

H. D. C. PEPLER