

# Common Clay



THE AMERICAN  
TERRA COTTA  
AND  
CERAMIC CO

CHICAGO  
ILL.

MARCH • NINETEEN TWENTY-TWO



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*They set the slave free, striking off his chains,  
Then he was as much of a slave as ever.*

*He was still chained to servility,  
He was manacled to indolence and sloth,  
He was still bound by fear and superstition,  
By ignorance, suspicion, and savagery; . . .  
His slavery was not in the chains,  
But in himself.*

*They can only set free men free . . .  
And there is no need of that;  
Free men set themselves free.*

JAMES OPPENHEIM

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15  
DISTINCTIVE BUILDINGS



LINCOLN HOTEL, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.  
RUBUSH & HUNTER, ARCHITECTS  
TERRA COTTA TRIMMED



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## EDITORIAL

AS time goes on, and competition gets keener and keener there is considerable danger that the cynical words of our old friend, Bierce, may contain more truth than we shall be glad to admit. In spite of the fact that it is generally acknowledged that "every knock is a boost" we prefer to take our "boosting" in some other method; and we can see no good accruing to anyone from the growing tendency, very noticeable of late, of salesmen of competitive materials introducing into their sales attack false statements, sometimes veiled, sometimes boldly nude, concerning the integrity of their competitors' material.

We deplore this situation, not because we fear attacks inspired by such obviously poor judgment, not because our material cannot successfully weather any unjust assault, but because we fear the unwholesome effect of this mode of attack on the mind of the prospective purchaser which must eventually undermine the influence of the modern salesman in the world of business. The position enjoyed by the true salesman of today is an enviable one, acquired only by the development of all that which is good in salesmanship. Look back over the past. The "drummer" of old was bound by no code of ethics. Psychology had no place in his scheme of life; and to him truth was indeed stranger than fiction. He had but one aim—to get some orders. A "repeat order" was too far in the future to trouble his narrow mind. The devel-

opment of an account was a matter outside of his experience. But as the science of modern business developed its progress soon was evidenced in salesmanship. The salesman gradually became what he is today—an educating force in business—not an order taker nor a commission raker. He learned that if he would be an educating force he must of necessity at all times honor truth, otherwise failure faced him. Unless he proved himself to be at all times reliable, his influence fled. Today the architect welcomes the well-equipped salesman of building material expecting to profit by the specialized knowledge freely and gladly offered.

Consequently we deplore any pernicious activity which may tend to weaken the confidence of the architect in the salesman and nothing can destroy this confidence so dearly bought more quickly than a disregard for truth by the salesman. Moreover, an open defiant lie is less dangerous, less pernicious than that variety so often met with—"a lie that is half a truth is ever the worst of lies." "I heard",—"they say",—"it is rumored",—has no place in the vocabulary of the modern salesman; and he who seeks temporary advantage by the prosecution of such obviously boomerang tactics does himself no good, his competitor no harm, but succeeds only in undermining the value of his profession to modern business. That value is too great, too dearly bought, to be jeopardized by the shortsightedness of an offending few.

*Infancy is that period of Life when according to Wordsworth "Heaven lies about us." The world begins lying about us pretty soon afterward.*

AMBROSE BIERCE





GIBSON SALES AND SERVICE BUILDING, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.  
HERBERT L. BASS, ARCHITECT





## BUTTON HOLE TALKS

W. D. GATES, PRESIDENT

THIS time I found him by the monument erected at 18th Street and the Illinois Central Railroad. Here is depicted in bronze the massacre of the Fort Dearborn garrison and the incident where Black Partridge saved the life of Mrs. Helm. Just across the railroad are the waters of Lake Michigan, right alongside the Pullman residence and all around the fine old residences that, a few decades ago, were termed the "Gold Coast." He was a typical hobo, dirty and unkempt, and his head seemed to be floating on a sea of whiskers which boiled and foamed out of his coat collar. How I got him loosened up in a conversational way I need not, and shall not, tell. Presently I called his attention to the massacre at which he brightened up and said:

"Yes, those things are getting mighty common, the police are never where they ought to be and, for that matter, if the police were not attending to their business, what was Old Man Pullman doing to allow such carryings on right here by his house? Why on earth couldn't he open his door and take them in till the mob got past? Anyway if he had used his head and done some thinking, he could have broken the whole mob up easy enough by putting one of his porters out there equipped with a whisk broom and extended palm; guess that would have faded them.

"Indians, you say they were? Yes that Goose Island gang are sure some Indians and a pretty tough lot and, if they were on the war path, and if the police were all out at the ball park, and if Old Man Pullman didn't do his duty and help them, and if these people were so set and determined to go down on the South Side and along the Lake Shore, why on earth didn't they call a Yellow Cab or take the I. C. You know the I. C. ain't bad and it's inexpensive. Maybe they were too blamed aristocratic.

"What's that you say? The I. C. wasn't here then. Now, stranger, don't try getting gay with me. The I. C. has *always* been here. Just look at that engine going past right now. It's not a tea kettle, it's a sure enough engine. It rattles along, leaking steam and squirting water, shedding nuts and bolts at every joggle, every now and then dropping a grate bar, but it keeps on going, it always has and it always will. There isn't much left of the original engine but just the habit of running, but habit is strong and it will keep right on running as long as there is a grate bar left. Why the whole right of way of that railroad is elevated, built up gradually, by the junk that rattled off its engines and the cinders blown from them. Didye see that big 1415 on the side of her tender? Her number? Go away, that's the date when they bought her. It really is tough when zero weather comes, it's pitiful to see those little 1400 B. C. engines suffer. They cough and sneeze and their noses run as they load up with snow and shake off icicles and seem pretty near giving up the ghost but they leak so much steam that it ultimately thaws off the whole Lake Front. It's awful, pitiful, and has won human sympathy, for the ladies of Hyde Park are now using the skill they acquired in knitting for the soldiers and are busy knitting sweaters for the poor little engines so that next winter these poor little long suffering engines can be warm and cozy.

"Well, stranger, if these people didn't take advantage of their opportunities or didn't have sense to size up their opportunities all I can say is they got what was coming to them and I'm not going to waste my sympathy on them and if you'll just let me have that other cigar I see in your pocket, I'll be moving along. I sure am glad you happened along, I needed a smoke."



# FOR OUR OWN PEOPLE

WHILE our knowledge of Natural History is insufficient to enable us to vouch for the accuracy of the statement about the gold-fish, yet the poet's assertion sounds reasonable; and his conclusion that captivity is stunting to a salesman is without question, solid, substantial truth. The captivity that is dangerous to progress, however, is not that bounded by the four walls of the office; but that captivity, as Oppenheim points out, resulting from the chains of servility, the manacles of indolence and sloth, the bonds of ignorance and suspicion. Servility chokes initiative; indolence and sloth are the forerunners of business death, and where ignorance and suspicion dwell, there can be no progress.

In an organization like ours, where we have nothing to sell but service—every workman is a salesman. When we say that we have nothing to sell but service we are stating the bare facts for when the architect signs the order for our product, he is not buying terra cotta—for the terra cotta is not then in existence. Neither is he dealing in futures. He is buying our combined knowledge and service and directing us to use that knowledge and service to produce in fact that which he had pictured in his brain and on paper. Terra Cotta is not a machine-made product: it is directly and unequivocally the result of the action of mind upon matter. The better the mind, the better the product; when the mind stops growing, the product reflects the catastrophe. We have promised to make better ware this year than ever before. Our research department will see to it that we get better clay, better ingredients, better firing. You must

see to it that the minds which are to act upon those materials are improving and growing. If you keep your minds enclosed by the walls of past experience, if you refuse to permit them to expand and grow, if your only reason for doing things in any certain way is that they have always been done that way—then our promise of better ware is empty and vain.

A mind held in slavery by the dead past can never be free, and a mind held in slavery can never produce good work.

Put your mind to work. Doubtless your experiments with home brew has taught you that it is extremely difficult to hold activity in slavery. Start to think,—it is impossible to confine the results of mental yeast—and some of it will spill over into your work. Then if you have a thought or an idea to spare, let us have it. Heaven knows we need

as many ideas as we can get. If you have an idea and don't want to talk about it, sit down and write a letter to the editor of "Common Clay," tell him all about it. We can promise you it will be received with gratitude and prompt consideration.

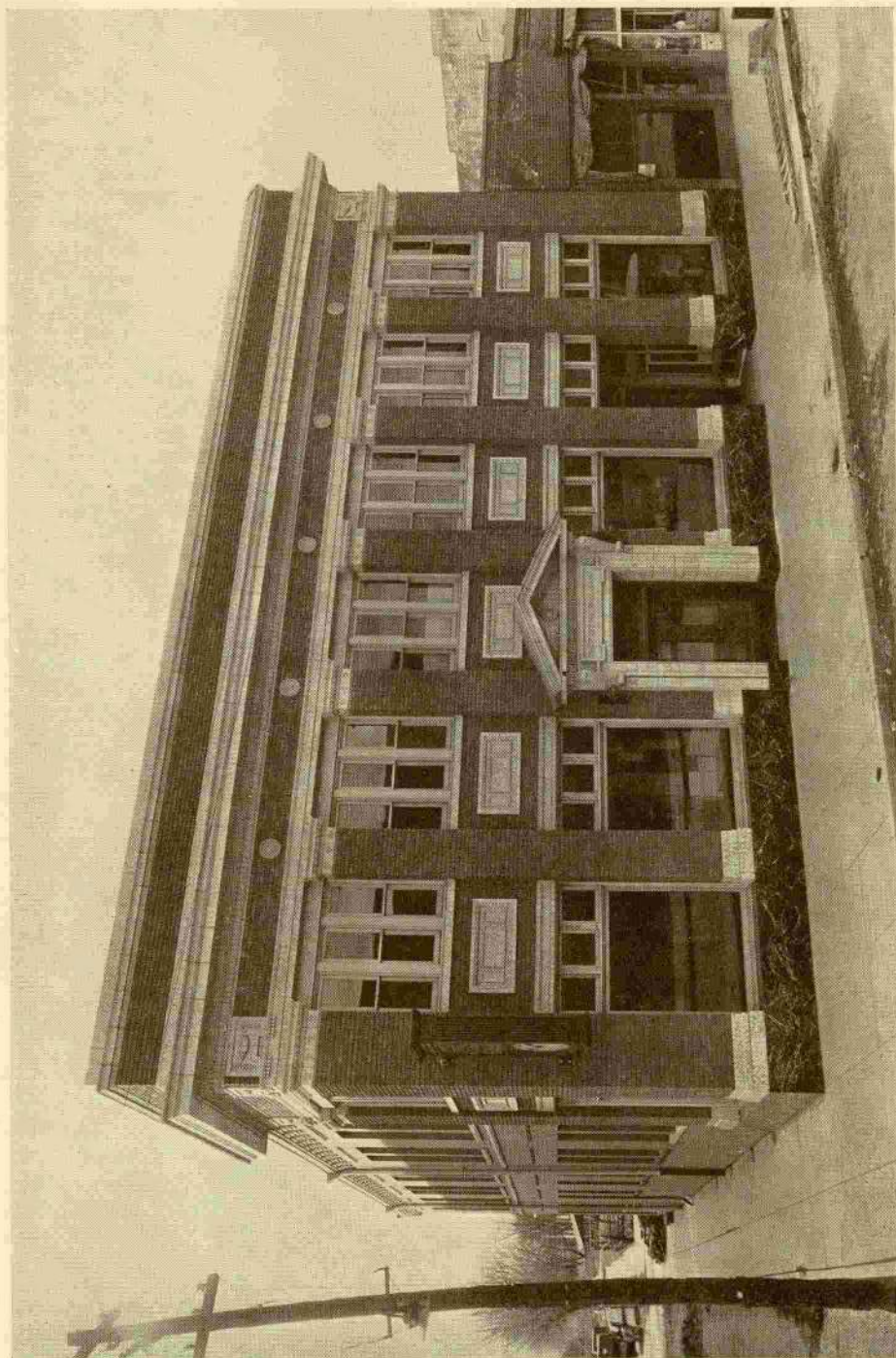
That goes, too, for any of our readers. The editor has a drawerful of letters praising this little monthly but the commendations are to the suggestions as one thousand is to one. Favorable comment doesn't help us any more than it did Aurelius Bud of whom Kin Hubbard wrote. "Aurelius Bud whose graduation essay, 'Th' Young Man's Opportunity is America' caused so much favorable comment is takin' tickets at th' nickel the-ater."

We care some for the best that is in you. We care more for the best that comes out of you. Let it come out.

*I have some goldfish,  
And they don't grow.  
No matter how much  
They're fed,  
But I'm told  
That if I'd free them  
Into a bigger pond  
They'd get as large  
As flounders  
Or calico bass.  
And when I look  
At the walls of my office  
I think of the goldfish globe  
And realize I have  
Nothing on the fish,  
That I must get out  
If I want to grow,  
That captivity is as  
Stunting to a salesman  
As to a goldfish.*

ANON





FIRST NATIONAL BANK, SHERIDAN, IND.  
CHARLES H. BYFIELD, ARCHITECT, INDIANAPOLIS



## IKY TELLS THE WORLD

WE were talking things over with Iky, when a customer walked in, and we cut our conversation short with,—“Come in and see us in about half an hour, Iky, and we’ll look into the matter.”

When Iky was out of earshot our friend said, “The name doesn’t seem to fit that chap. He looks anything but Jewish.”

“You’re right,” we laughed, “he isn’t. But ‘Iky’ is not the affectionate diminutive of Isaac but an honorable abbreviation of a big long word. The old boy has been in the building game since O. W. Norcross showed

the world how to ‘general contract’; but instead of following the time-honored custom of digging himself into a rut, covering his head like an ostrich any time anything that looked like an original idea threatened to assert itself, he planted himself on top of the ground, kept his eyes open, and told the whole world that the poet had the wrong dope; that he was convinced that, in the building game, at least, ‘Whatever is, is wrong.’ Some years ago, after one of his characteristic harangues, one of the boys blurted, ‘You’re nothing but a blasted, bigoted iconoclast.’ ‘True for you,’ came the answer, ‘but you took too long to say it. Call me Iky for short.’ And Iky he has been to this day.”

After our client had finished and gone, Iky came in again, but not wishing to continue the original conversation, we opened up.

“The First National people are going to build a new bank building.” “So?” questioned Iky, “and have they an architect or an ar-chee-tek?”

“We don’t know,” we admitted, “but we sure would like to see the job go Terra Cotta.”

“It all depends,” said Iky, “if they have an ar-chee-tek, there’s only

one momentous question to settle.”

“And what’s that?” we asked.

“Whether there’s going to be four columns or six columns. It *does* make a difference, you’ll admit, and when the board of Directors have settled that, what more can you expect?”

“Doesn’t the ar-chee-tek submit any other problems for discussion?”

“Why should he?” said Iky, “It’s all been settled for him. The design must be ‘clarsic,’ you know that. All his designer has to do is to turn to his ‘libery’ and crib like a freshman under the honor system. He’ll pass, just as the freshman

does; God forgive him and protect his client.”

“We may have the luck to find an architect on the job,” we ventured.

“That’s a horse of a different color,” said Iky. “It has been our good fortune to do work for many an architect; but you’ll agree with Rudyard ‘that’s another story.’”

“It sure is,” sighed we, “but Iky, you’ve dropped a shell in the strong-point of the offensive directed against us. We’re jumping hurdles, but your slightly veiled sarcasms against ‘ar-chee-tek’ and ‘the clarsic’ willy nilly runs us plumb up against our old sales resistance: Terra Cotta, the manufactured material versus granite and stone, natural materials.”

“I get you” rejoined Iky, “and it’s funny to me. You find your greatest resistance because the ‘ar-chee-tek’ guy follows the line of the least resistance. I don’t know whether that’s a paradox or not, but it goes. You see, the ‘ar-chee-tek’ who cribs his design will naturally crib his material. He won’t reason it out, because he isn’t expressing himself. He was ‘educated to be an ar-chee-tek’ at considerable expense. God forbid that he should waste the money. He didn’t learn to think—he

*I-CON-O-CLAST: N. 1. An image breaker; one who is devoted to the destruction of images that are venerated or worshipped, 2. One who assails traditional beliefs. (Gr. eikon, image—klao break.)*

ANY DICTIONARY



learned that all things worth while came out of the dead past, and the best we poor creatures of today can do for art and humanity is to make as accurate a copy as possible of separate details and then jumble them all together wherever they will fit in.

"It isn't possible for him to function as a creator; he lives in the stone age; he doesn't hit on all six, so how should he know that the inspired genius he so slavishly follows used the materials at his hand because no better was to be had? How should he know how many times that genius prayed to every God he knew to send him a material plastic enough, colorful enough, to enable him to climb Parnassus? How should he know that Michel Angelo once cried out, 'if this clay could become marble, woe to antique statuary'? The clay has become anything he wants it to be and he doesn't know it. If he were consistent, he would insist that steel is an imitation material. The stone-ax was good enough in the old days, why not now? Neither did the masters use a bath-tub, nor hollow tile, nor arched flooring, nor caissons to bed-rock, nor fabricated steel, nor hyrib, nor borrowed lights. The man who creates uses the best materials his times has produced. That's what marks his genius,—his creative mind working on the best materials afforded him. But what's the use? You have heard all this before."

"Well, Iky, of course you're right" we said, "but as the lad said to his dad, what are we going to do about it?"

"I'll tell you what I would do about it. I'd tell 'em about it. The more you tell 'em the more you sell 'em. Treat 'em rough. The trouble with your salesmen is that they haven't the nerve to pick a fight, and scarcely enough nerve to defend themselves when attacked. Say, Skipper, I've got an idea. Let me tell 'em. Head the stuff 'Iky Tells the World,' and believe me, I wouldn't run out of the matter. I'll be a real iconoclast instead of a sham one. Nobody will mind if I get rough. If they pick on

you about it, pass the buck to me."

"We don't know but what you're right" we thought out loud, "but you know that there are architects in this wide world as well as 'ar-chee-teks'."

"Right you are, Skipper," was the answer, "but no real architect is going to get sore about the things I say. He'll be with me. No decent man gets huffy when an idea is thrown at him. I've a list of subjects thought out already, and believe me, there's plenty to tell 'em. Remember, Skipper, the more you tell 'em, the more you sell 'em."

"It's a go, Iky," we promised. "We'll write out the story of this conversation, just as it happened, as a sort of introduction for you, and publish it in the March issue. 'Gentlemen,' we'll write, 'this is Iky. Duck! He's on his way to do some real iconoclasting. Prepare to sweep up some broken images and fractured traditional beliefs.'"

"There'll be little to sweep up" returned Iky. "It will be more of a case of spontaneous combustion, like the old fellow in Dickens. You won't see much of a result for a little while, but I've got an idea in my noodle that the ar-chee-tek isn't a bad sort of fellow and some of his curious ideas will blow away some night—Now you see it and now you don't—sort of stuff."

"Don't go too strong at first, Iky," we interrupted. "You might let yourself in for a sweet tumble."

"Leave it to me Skipper. Like Frank Bacon—I was an ar-chee-tek myself once even if I never did drive any bees across the plains. I'll stand up like Frank Bacon when it's all over and inquire whether there's anything else to ask."

"That's all right, Iky, my boy, but remember that a work well started is half-finished. Plan your stuff carefully for before anybody reads it you must sell it to me. Any iconoclasting to be done around here must be shot according to rules—my rules—Now go to it."

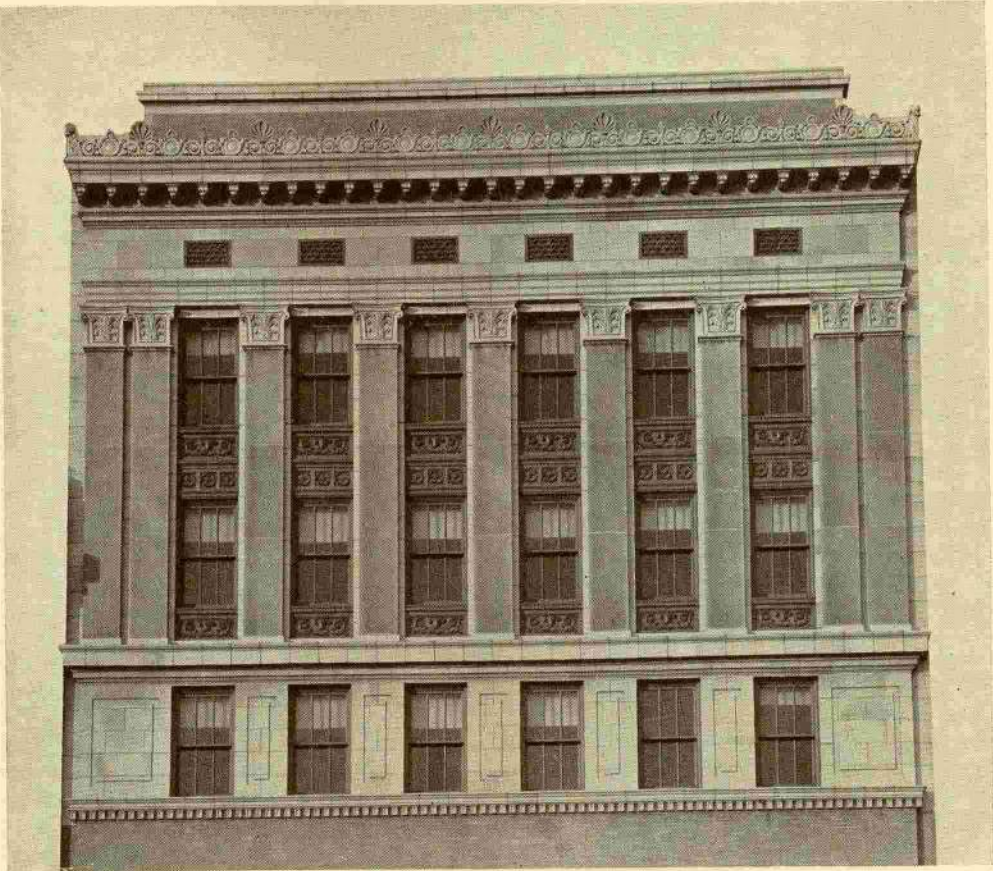
(To be continued)





NATIONAL CITY BANK, INDIANAPOLIS. IND.  
HOGGSON BROS., ARCHITECTS AND CONTRACTORS





DETAIL—UPPER STORIES—NATIONAL CITY BANK  
HOGGSON BROS., ARCHITECTS AND CONTRACTORS

THE work pictured on this page and the opposite one was manufactured at our Indianapolis plant, for as you know the Indianapolis Terra Cotta Co. makes "American" Terra Cotta than which there is none better.

We show a special detail of the upper stories because of the rather unusual use of stone pilaster shafts, while all the rest of the material shown is a product of clay—terra cotta and brick.

We are very proud of the progress made by the Indianapolis plant. If hard work, loyalty, zeal and brains can accomplish wonders—then the Indianapolis plant will. The men are up on their toes all the time and have already shown what can be done against odds.

They are enjoying a new kiln which is turning out a fine grade of "American" Terra Cotta, turning it out quickly; and if they keep up the pace already set, the parent plant at Terra Cotta, Illinois, will have to step lively to stay in the procession.

The work shown on pages 1, 3, 7, 13 and 14 of this issue was manufactured at the Indianapolis plant and it is a credit to them and to us. It is also a source of satisfaction to us to see that the architects of Indiana appreciate the "American" quality product, made in their great Capitol City, and we are looking forward to the time when their patronage will necessitate building another new kiln.



## CIRCLING THE CIRCLE

CLOSE study of statistics gathered from all parts of the country, figures, charts, maps,—all purporting to visualize the market for building materials, leaves one in about the same frame of mind as does the first reading of the insert. Goldsmith's fine collection of good words, every word a wonder, a triumph of the wordsmith's art, circles the circle and leaves the reader dizzy. The business condition charts beautifully rendered by the wise ones makes Einstein look easy, and brings four dimensional activities within the comprehension of the kindergarten. The charts look like a cross-section of the Everest range and are almost as insurmountable. Strange, too, that the jagged line they show should produce a line of reasoning which resolves itself into a perfect circle—but it does. So we have taken them away from the honorable position which they occupied in our files and have thrown them into the waste paper basket.

The only way in which normal conditions can be created is via normal procedure. The only way to create wealth is to produce wealth. The wealth accruing to the producer must be in direct ratio to the wealth which he produces. The cost of producing never stands still. It goes either up or down. Up to the point where the law of diminishing returns begins to operate, the cost of doing business is never so great as the cost of not doing business. The cost of doing an inadequate amount of business is a burden too great to be borne.

This all points in one direction. We have reduced our four dimensional obstruction to a problem of one dimension,—a forward motion. We are going to do more business. The cost of that business is largely dependent upon how much business we are going to get.

The price you pay is entirely dependent upon the cost. Despite the brilliant effort of the chartists pre-war costs and pre-war prices have nothing whatever to do with the question. The added cost of doing business due to the fact that we must pay for the war must be met, not by an added item on the cost sheet, but by added production. The wealth we threw away must be replaced by increasing the daily average production.

The situation spells but one thing—and that is that we must all work harder and produce more. Costs and prices will adjust themselves to everyone's satisfaction if that course is pursued.

We face the coming season with undiluted optimism because we feel that the lesson has been learned. We know what we must do and our sleeves are rolled up.

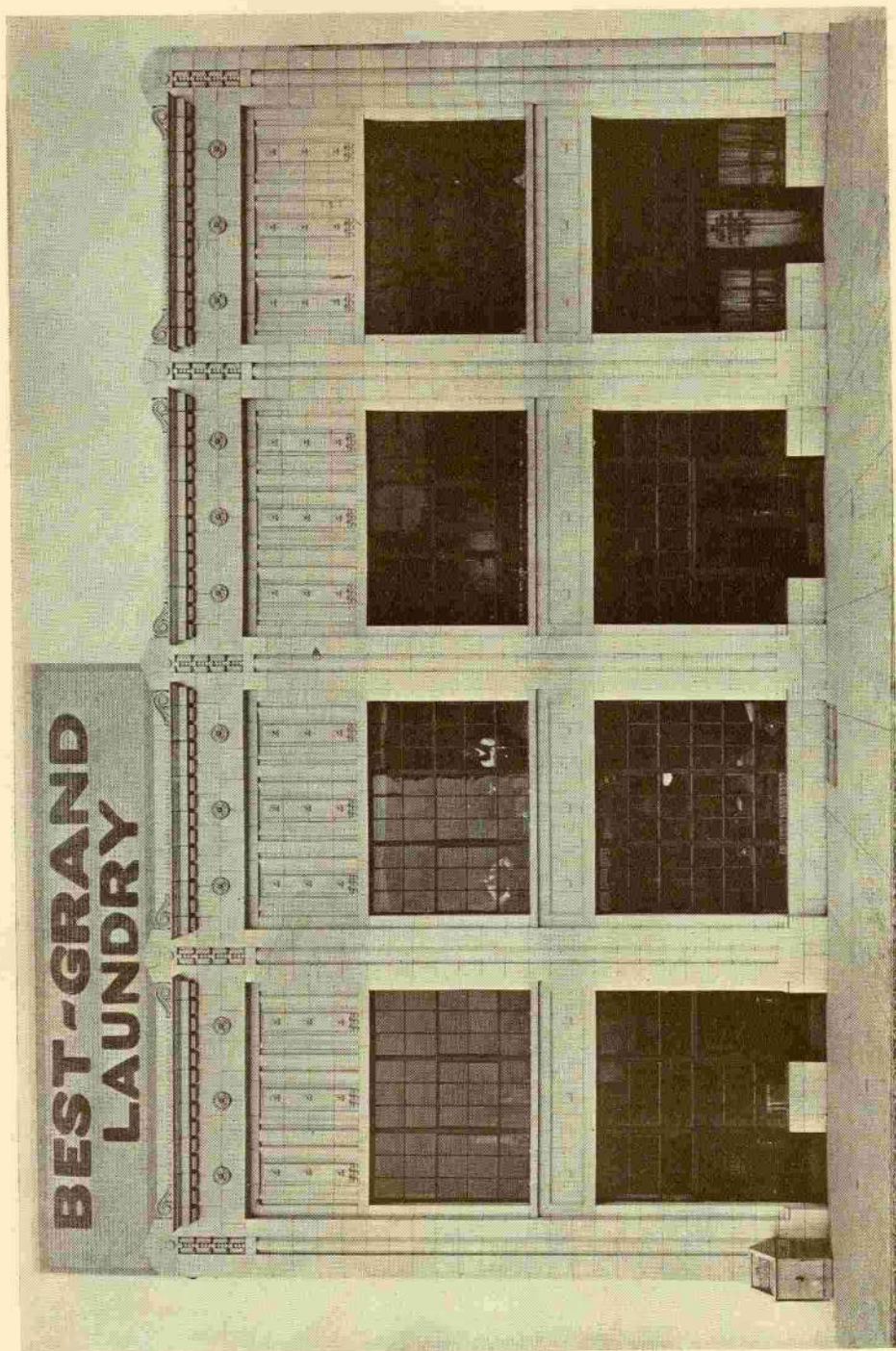
We have stated as a fundamental fact that the cost of doing business is never so great as the cost of *not* doing business. Charles M. Schwab says that the hungriest monster conceivable is a factory running at less than capacity. It devours surplus faster than industry can build it up. We murmur a heartfelt "Amen." That industrial giant knows what he is talking about. The high cost of idleness must go; the burden of too little business must be metamorphosed into the burden of constant industry. The average individual production must be increased, the total factory production must be doubled.

We have gained something when we have decided upon a definite direction, and the battle is half won. Stevenson says, "It is better to travel hopefully than to arrive." We are unwilling to concede this illuminating statement in its entirety but we will admit that it is good to travel hopefully. It is better to travel in a straight line than in a circle.

*The concatenation of self-existence, proceeding in a reciprocal, duplicate ratio, naturally produces a problematical dialogism which in some measure proves that the essence of spirituality may be referred to the second predicable.*

VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

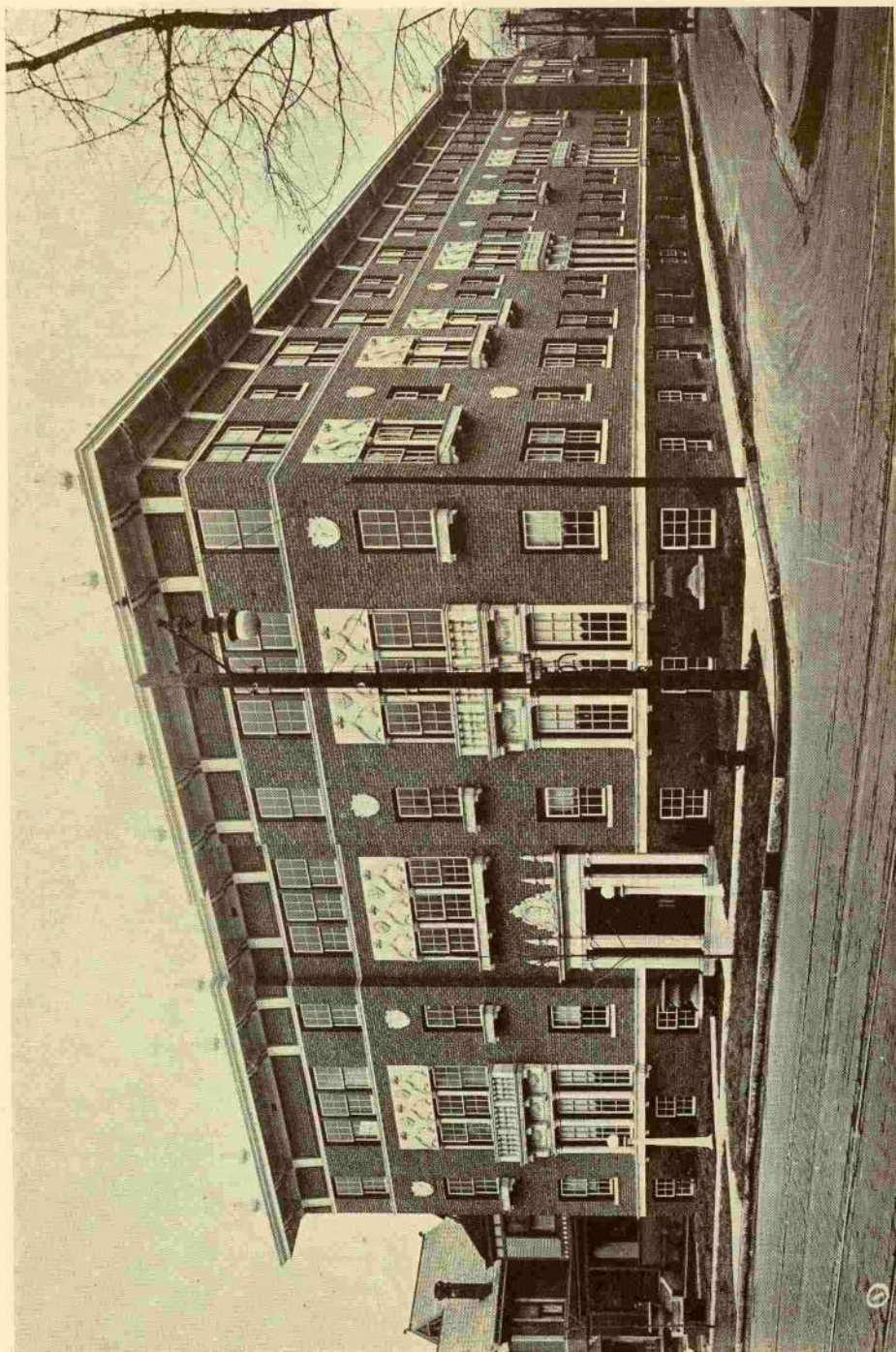




BEST LAUNDRY, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.  
VONNEGUT, BOHN & MUELLER, ARCHITECTS



COMMON CLAY



SAVILLE APARTMENTS, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.  
GEORGE & MCLUCAS, ARCHITECTS





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

THIS, Ladies and Gentlemen, is what is known as a hippogrif, a fabled animal having the head of a griffin and the body of a horse. There are those wise men who know all about the land of fable who insist that the composite animal should have the claws of a griffin and that the hind legs should have the hoof of the horse.

Be that as it may this hippogrif is good enough for us; and is, we think, a pretty fair piece of modelling. We haven't been able to make up our minds just where Mr. Schneider borrowed the tail, but we will admit that considering its length he most certainly has disposed of it gracefully enough.



## Pulsichrome Finish



P LEASING IN APPEARANCE  
U NQUESTIONABLY ARTISTIC  
L AST WORD IN CERAMIC FINISH  
S OLVES THE POLYCHROME QUESTION  
I NEVITABLY YOUR CHOICE  
C ONSTANTLY SUGGESTIVE  
H ONEST IN FUNDAMENTALS  
R ESPONSIVE TO INITIATIVE  
O VERWHELMINGLY INTERESTING  
M OST POSITIVELY YOU WILL  
E VENTUALLY SPECIFY IT



*Ask Us to Tell You More of*  
**PULSICHROME**



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WHAT'S the matter with this Land of the Free and Home of the Brave, anyhow?

One night not very long ago we went to sleep in a country prospering as no other country has ever prospered, with everybody working, everybody doing things and everybody happy. The next morning we woke up in a blue funk.

What happened over night?

Nothing a-tall, except that during our sleep we became victims of a sudden attack of chicken-heartedness, and we woke with our faces long enough to eat oats out of a churn. And right now, with the land full of foodstuffs, with more gold than any country ever had before, with the finest mechanics in the world and the best equipped factories known to man, our faces are still as long as pump handles and we stumble about as those having no hope.

What'nell's the matter, anyhow?

We've got foodstuffs enough in hand to feed the world. We can make goods enough to supply the world. We've got control of the money supply of the world. We suffered less from the ravages of war and profited more from the war than any other country. And yet here we are in the "dumps" and wondering what will happen next.

Isn't it about time we "come out of it"?

Let loose of that dollar you are pinching until the Goddess of Liberty thereon squeals for mercy. It will pay a dollar of your debts, and a dollar of the other fellow's debts, and so on around the circle until it gets back to you. An idle dollar is the most useless thing in the world.

Let's go! If ever there was a time when optimism ought to be at a premium that time is now. If there ever was a time when the pessimist should be taken outside the city limits and boiled in oil that time is right now.

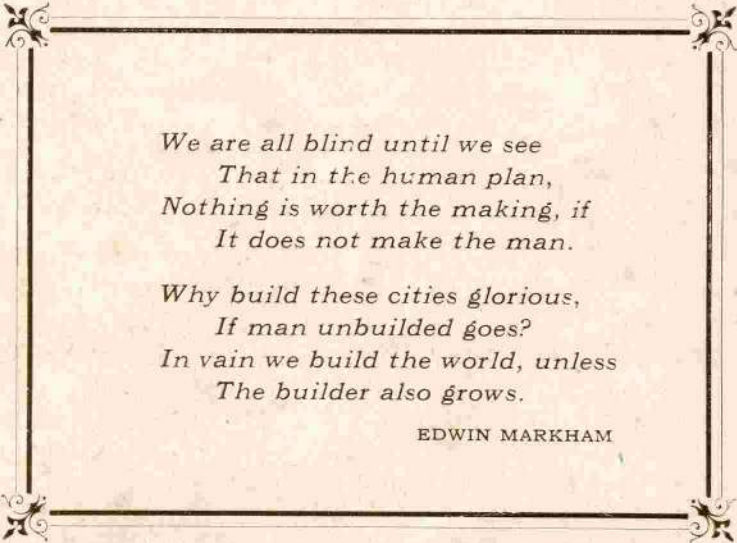
We've been bellyaching long enough. Let's get a dose of Old Doc Gotoit's Double Distilled Extract of Getupandgit and forget all our abdominal convulsions.

WILL MAUPIN

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*We are all blind until we see  
That in the human plan,  
Nothing is worth the making, if  
It does not make the man.*

*Why build these cities glorious,  
If man unbuilt goes?  
In vain we build the world, unless  
The builder also grows.*

EDWIN MARKHAM