

THE TERRACE IN DESIGN ITS SHARE IN THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE.

Architects Say It Ties the House to the Ground—It Must Give the Look of Age and Stability—No Contrast Should Show in the House and Its Surroundings—Some Good Specimens.

Nothing more excites the admiration of American travellers in England than the way in which the walls of the English cathedrals shoot from their velvety slopes into the air with no other medium between the smooth grass and the stone walls. Interesting as this phenomenon may be to the lay observer of the wonders of English cathedral architecture there are certain artistic objections to this combination which have the weight of very eminent authority. There are many noted critics of architecture who find no beauty in this abrupt contrast between mediums which are so totally at variance in their essential features as the ground on which these churches stand and the material from which they are built.

It is to combine these two somewhat less abruptly that the terrace in its many and varied forms exists. It is the outward and visible transition from the site on which it stands to the building itself. It bridges over the differences between the earth and the material of which the house is composed.

Every architect attempts, whatever may be the elaborateness of the house he is building, to make it look as if it had stood forever on that spot. What some instructors describe as the task of tying it to the ground or, in even stronger words, giving it a good grip on the earth is supposed to be the duty of the terrace. It prepares the eye for the sight of the house.

The philosophy of the situation is not difficult to understand. First, there comes into consideration in viewing a house the fact that it is situated on the earth. It is composed of course of materials very different from the earth. The terrace which surrounds the house comprises always parts of both elements of a house. It is necessarily on the ground. On the other hand, it is also made up in a measure of the composition, whether it be brick, stone or concrete, with which the house is constructed.

Between the two parts of the house, which are the walls and the site, standing as a connecting link and consisting in part of the elements of both, is the terrace. That was of course the original conception of the purpose of the terrace. As it is true, however, that expediency and experience often prove sufficiently strong to give a secondary purpose which may in the end become more important than the first, so it has come to pass that the terrace means much more to-day to Americans than the mere connecting link between the house and the ground on which it is built. It has come in the gradual decline of the piazza in favor to take in a measure the place of that once popular detail of all American homes.

For in spite of the hold that the piazza



PERGOLA AND TERRACE.

did have on the taste of Americans it seems now as if this affection would have to be divided between several other means of enjoying the facilities which it was formerly possible only for the piazza to supply. This out of door room, which the piazza alone used to be, is now divided between the pergola and the terrace. They possess advantages which a more discriminating taste has discovered are impossible to the porch. They do not darken rooms, they are not necessarily a part of the scheme of the house and then sitting out of doors is coming to be thought much better than sitting under even the roof of a piazza. And the roof of a pergola has some qualities that make it superior to any other kind of a covering for an out of door room.

The original purpose of the terrace is well executed, however, when there is something about it to suggest the union of the ground and the house which is to stand on it. This purpose is well suggested in the terrace of the brick house in New England taken from the *Brick-builder*, as well as in the terrace of the Italian concrete house by Hill & Stout. It is in these two pictures that the intimation of masonry appearing in the grounds serves to illustrate strikingly the object of this architectural detail in a house.

As the terrace has acquired other



TERRACE AT GARDEN CITY.



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purposes and uses in this country it has assumed new problems for its designers. There is of course the terrace wall, which may in some instances be built of the same material as the house in a solid wall of masonry. Or the balustrade may consist of separate pillars or other single pieces. Often a terrace may be exposed that it is too windy to be used as an out of door piazza. In such a case it is usual to protect the corners by higher walls, or some other part of the terrace, perhaps the corners, are so built that it is possible to sit there without too great exposure to the wind. There are a variety of ways that make the terrace most adapted to its uses. One in Westchester county stretches straight away from the level of the house, which has on one side a small piazza built into the side of the house. It is large enough for persons who want to sit in the air without going out of doors. The formal garden which is built on the terrace is so much an essential part of the house, however, that one may step on to that without feeling in the least away from the house. This stretch of smooth, velvety turf, with its sun dial in the centre, might readily be a continuation of the piazza.

The wall of the terrace is a balustrade of concrete. Six feet below this is the tennis court. It is sufficiently far below the top of the hill to be protected by the wall from the breezes that sweep over the Westchester hills. So when tea is served on the terrace it is carried down one of the two flights of steps to the court, where to draught can interfere with the enjoyment of the guests. The court has of course the advantage of plenty of room and a wide space running about it. So there is plenty of room for the tea table.

Other devices to protect the terrace from too great exposure to the winds are

adopted by architects. These of course take at times the elaborate forms of pergolas or even pavilions, which seem to be merely of the decorative order. They are really covered with glass. Other expedients serve to make the terrace seem a more intimate and integral part of the house. One instance of this may be seen when the wings of a house are so extended as to take in the terrace and thus convert it into a species of patio or court, although open on one side.

There are other types of the terrace in which the wall about it is extended to a height of three or four feet and allowed to run about the three sides of the terrace, thus converting it, as it were, into a species of formal garden and a really essential part of the house. Then there are, especially in some of the hilly parts of Westchester county, terraces that are intended primarily to afford a beautiful view of the surrounding country. They are in reality observatories. Many of them are, however, very ingeniously contrived. They usually rise from the side of the house that contains the main entrance. From the drawing room, or if may be from the hall, opposite the main entrance, a flight of steps leads to the terrace. This is covered with turf and over the wall at the other side, which may sometimes be two or three feet high, and, if there is no deep fall on the other side, may not be more than a foot, there is the view of Sound or valleys which the speciality of the place may be. Here the useful side of the terrace is very plainly defined. Its aesthetic utility from an architectural point of view, however, rests always on



BERNARDSVILLE HOUSE WITH TERRACE AND PIAZZA COMBINED.

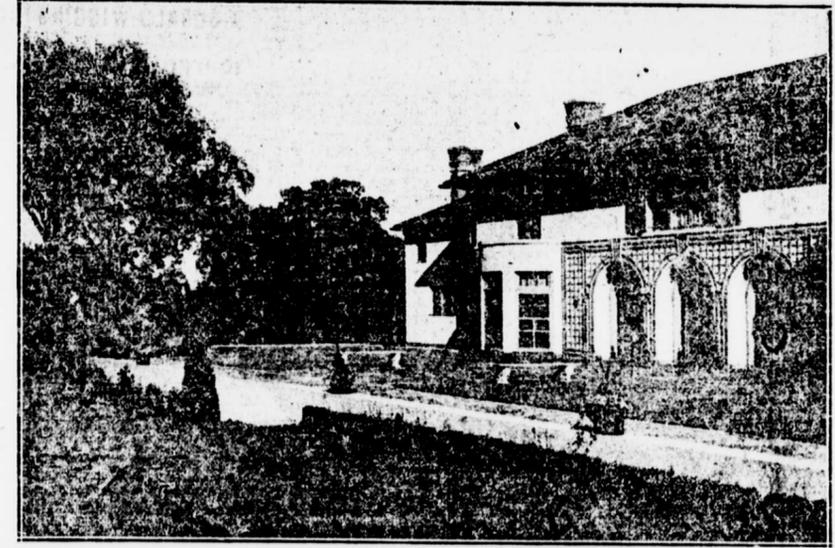
the principle that it helps to hold the house to the ground. It prepares also the aesthetic sense of the beholder for the transition from the ground to the material of the house. The other useful and decorative ends that the terrace has come to serve in this country house design, are secondary and derivative.

An excellent example of the union of piazza and terrace is shown in the house built at Bernardsville by Lord & Hewlett. Here the extension of the piazza to the edge of the terrace unites the two closely and attractively frames the garden. Here the open piazza at the end of the wing accomplishes every purpose of the ordinary piazza and at the same time there is the garden immediately at hand for one who desires greater space than this piazza affords. The brick terrace with its simple wall to mark its boundaries might for all the convenience it affords to the occupants of the house be an uncovered piazza, so directly does it lie toward the house itself.

The country house at Southampton, done by Albro & Lindeberg, shows an interesting combination of pergola and terrace. Here the drop from the terrace is only a few feet and the brick steps are flanked by two carthorn jars. Aymar Embury 2d's terrace at Garden City novel in that the piazza gives directly on the house, while the brick terrace rises to a height of a foot or more at the edge of the piazza, which is on the floor level.



PIAZZA AND TERRACE COMBINED.



TERRACE AND ENTRANCE TO A LONG ISLAND HOME.

THE TRADE OF 23D STREET NOT AFFECTED BY NORTHWARD MIGRATION OF SHOPS.

The Street, It Would Seem, Must Remain a Central Thoroughfare in the Retail Trade—A Fine Wholesale Business Coming In West of Sixth Avenue.

Twenty-third street by reason of its geographical position will remain for a long time to come the leading cross-town street in this city. Three of the most important thoroughfares, namely, Madison avenue, Fifth avenue and Broadway, converge into Twenty-third street; and while a number of shops have moved further uptown, by far the bigger part of the shopping district is still south of Twenty-third street. In view of the tremendous growth of this town it would be absurd to suppose that the shopping district will not continue to expand south as well as north of Twenty-third street. A member of the firm of Stern Bros. recently stated that, notwithstanding the dullness existing throughout the city, their business has increased considerably. The new buildings that they are erecting on Twenty-third street are designed to meet their increased business and to afford their customers greater shopping facilities. Shopkeepers throughout this street report very prosperous conditions, and there are decidedly few stores at fair prices that can be had.

On Twenty-third street between Sixth and Eighth avenues our office controls a number of mercantile buildings, and this is the very first time that we have been able to report a vacant space, with an excellent demand for floor space in these buildings. The buildings are occupied by high class manufacturing concerns, chiefly makers of white goods and dress goods. These wholesale establishments do their business mainly with the department stores, and the Twenty-third street in this neighborhood especially convenient to Thirty-fourth street as well as to the Sixth avenue shopping district.

The new lot and office buildings that have been erected between Sixth and

Seventh avenues are buildings of a very high class type of construction. In addition to the new buildings already up, the new Masonic building, which is to be erected upon the site of the old Masonic Temple, on the corner of Sixth avenue and Twenty-third street, a number of other high class improvements are contemplated. It is confidently expected that within a very short time this street west of Sixth avenue will be improved solidly with office and mercantile buildings of the best type.

There has been considerable activity in this section since the first of the year. Within the last two weeks our office has sold to J. J. Cavanagh the seven story building at 256 West Twenty-third street. This gives Mr. Cavanagh a plot of 100 feet frontage on which he contemplates the erection of a modern office and left building, with dining hall in the lower part of the building. Mr. Cavanagh reports that his business has grown over 50 per cent. within the last two years and that up to the present time nothing but lack of space has prevented his expanding further.

Last week we sold for Herman Gottlieb the six story building at 255 and 257 West Twenty-second street, which abuts the Twenty-third street property, and while the new owner does not desire his intentions to be disclosed it is understood that a very high class development is contemplated.

The owners of the Chelsea Hotel, which was built over twenty years ago and which at that time was considered one of the finest hotels in the country, have recently acquired additional to their holdings in the rear. Westmoreland Davis recently stated that the hotel was running at capacity and doing a bigger business than ever before, and it is presumed that the purchase was for the purpose of enlarging their accommodations.

rent for \$2,400 and basement stores for \$2,300. The 24 foot stores are rented for \$2,000, and between Seventh and Eighth avenues the 10 foot stores average about \$1,600.

The widening of Twenty-third street as proposed by Borough President McAnery and which will extend from Secord to Seventh avenues will have an important influence on the future of this street. The widening will involve the removal of stoops. These stoops at one time were valuable and ornamental additions to handsome residences, but since the transformation of the street into a business they have become a serious detriment to the neighborhood and have had considerable influence in holding back the advancement of Twenty-third street west of Sixth avenue and east of Fourth avenue.

For a long time the high class business development stopped at the first stoop line west of Sixth avenue. The reason for this is obvious; show windows under stoops cannot be made attractive. In consequence many very unattractive concerns have occupied the old lawns and parlor stores there. Mercantile owners have contented themselves with the increase in the value of their land and have not attempted to improve their property.

However, owners have been served with notices to remove encroachments existing under the water table and the building line by May 1. With this removal in view and the advantages which are bound to accrue from the removal of the stoops, a half block on both sides important changes are bound to come on this street.

It is reported that the Borough President's plan for the widening of the street, which is not necessary for the proposed removal of the stoops, will be voluntarily undertaken by the owners, with the result that we have increased our rentals.

more than ample for pedestrian traffic in that part of the street. The reason for this is obvious; show windows under stoops cannot be made attractive. In consequence many very unattractive concerns have occupied the old lawns and parlor stores there. Mercantile owners have contented themselves with the increase in the value of their land and have not attempted to improve their property.

COOPERATIVE TRUCK FARMING.

An Interesting Experiment to Be Tried at Bay Shore, L. I.

A novel departure in suburban development work is to be tried by the T. B. Ackerson Company, which some years ago founded the residence park of Brightwaters at Bay Shore, L. I. The company's holdings there include 1,200 acres. A tract of 400 acres just north of Brightwaters has been set aside for a subdivision into truck farms and fruit gardens, the produce of which it is believed will find a ready market at Brightwaters and other neighboring suburbs. The tract will contain a hundred or more homesteads of from one to ten acres each, to be operated on a cooperative plan.

The plan of cooperation as worked out by the company, with the assistance of expert agriculturists, includes a demonstration farm to be operated by the company for the benefit of the surrounding farmers. This farm will also be a bureau of information and expert advice. The company has employed as agricultural agent a professional agriculturist, who has been in the employ of the Government and has similar capacity and who is also holding an important position on the farm. The demonstration farm, owned by George Vandenberg at Ashville, N. C. The company's farm will demonstrate scientific methods in practically every branch of agriculture, such as truck gardening, dairying, horticulture, fruit growing, etc., to which the special soil, climate and conditions may be adapted.

A second cooperative feature will be a department for the supply of labor and

MORE LIGHT AND AIR NEEDED IN OFFICE AND MERCANTILE BUILDINGS.

The Present Law, Which Permits Such Buildings to Cover 90 Per Cent. of Their Sites, Should Be Revised Many Employees in Unsanitary Quarters.

A plea for more light and air in loft and office buildings was made by G. Richard Davis, secretary of the firm of A. L. Moreland & Son, in an address last Tuesday evening before the cooperative plan to plough his ground, to cultivate and harvest his crop and finally to market his product. The same cooperative plan is to be put into effect in every special line. Should a farmer who may be inexperienced in a line contemplated wish to specialize in poultry, swine, fruits or bees he will be given the same special assistance. The writer on agricultural subjects is quoted as saying: "The Ackerson idea of demonstration and cooperative farming is entirely new and supplies the missing link between the farmer and the agricultural experimental stations that has hitherto been needed to turn profitable account to the farmer the great work that has been done by the Government in scientific agriculture."

Height of Buildings.

New York is one of the few cities of the world that do not impose a limit on the height of buildings. Some years ago twenty stories was a great height, but now forty and fifty story buildings are no surprise. Recently announced in the city of Chicago 200 feet is the limit. In most other large cities some restriction is in force. For instance, in Boston a building cannot be taller than 110 feet, in Chicago 200 feet is the limit. In foreign cities the height of a building is generally regulated by the width of the street it stands on. In England, under the law of ancient lights, the top of a building must fall within an angle of not more than 45 degrees drawn from a point in the middle of the street.

It is light or not is the rental basis of almost all loft buildings, at least from the renting brokers and owners standpoint. Tenants, however, have been quick to see the advantage that light space offers and will pay more for a loft which is light than a loft which is dark.

Within the past few years the new loft section in the Twenties has developed enormously and practically all of the new buildings are ten to twelve and now some of them sixteen stories in height. The law permits these buildings to cover 90 per cent. of the lot and does not restrict the height of such buildings, no matter what the width of the street is. The present custom is to leave a yard or court at the rear of loft buildings ten feet in depth or less. In a six foot street build up solid with two story buildings, and the street on the rear likewise, the lofts are lighted only from the front and rear. Front light is gained from a street sixty feet wide; rear light from a court not over twenty feet wide, which is the width of the yard of the two buildings, one on each street. It is obvious that such lofts are poorly lighted. There is a large quantity of interior space which would be as solidly dark if it were not for reflected light and artificial light. Such space is unsanitary, unwholesome and undesirable and is worth less than light space.

Loft buildings are built entirely too deep. They should have yards at least twenty feet deep unless they have permanent side light, such as corner buildings have. It might be well to consider, however, that legislation will be necessary on this point before the proper methods of lightening will be observed as regards the interior space which would be as solidly dark if it were not for reflected light and artificial light. Such space is unsanitary, unwholesome and undesirable and is worth less than light space. Loft buildings are built entirely too deep. They should have yards at least twenty feet deep unless they have permanent side light, such as corner buildings have. It might be well to consider, however, that legislation will be necessary on this point before the proper methods of lightening will be observed as regards the interior space which would be as solidly dark if it were not for reflected light and artificial light. Such space is unsanitary, unwholesome and undesirable and is worth less than light space. Loft buildings are built entirely too deep. They should have yards at least twenty feet deep unless they have permanent side light, such as corner buildings have. It might be well to consider, however, that legislation will be necessary on this point before the proper methods of lightening will be observed as regards the interior space which would be as solidly dark if it were not for reflected light and artificial light. Such space is unsanitary, unwholesome and undesirable and is worth less than light space.