TREND OF MODERN GERMAN FEELING IN ART AND ARCHITECTURE MADE EVIDENT BY THE NÜRNBERG EXPOSITION: BY DR. HEINRICH PUDOR

The significance of a big exposition, aside from its value as an educator of the public, lies chiefly in the fact that it fixes and places on record the general trend of feeling that finds expression in the art, architecture, and industrialism of the nation or the age. Viewed in this way, the Nürnberg Exposition is of even greater interest than the exposition lately held in Dresden, and of which a review was printed in The Craftsman for October, for here the modern German feeling in art and architecture finds bolder and more untrammelled expression. The plan of the Nürnberg Exposition as a whole, and the design of the buildings, shows the really earnest striving after simplicity and solidity that marks so much of the new German architecture, and also shows just where the very earnestness of the effort to attain these qualities overshoots the mark and sometimes fails to produce the desired effect of strength and primitiveness. The Exposition is approached through a grove of birch trees and over a wide greensward, and the modesty of the entrance heightens the effect of the great square of buildings. For the first time in the development of a complete exposition plan, harmonious color effects have been considered, and aesthetic as well as architectural requirements have been well met. The green terraces set with red tables have for a background the quiet blue of the structural decorations, and form an interesting contrast to the pale surfaces of the buildings and the white of the lime-covered road.

With regard to the architecture of the exposition buildings, Biedermeier is the presiding genius to an even greater extent than at Dresden, where his influence was apparent only in the structural features and decoration of the interior. The rhythmic quality is given by the placing of two striking observation towers in the German Empire style on one side, and the long stretch of the industrial structure on the other. Together with the main restaurant, which is constructed in the same Empire style, and which is situated between them, these towers may be pronounced the architectural success of the Exposition. The Industrial Arts Building represents a garden pavilion in the Bieder-
meier style, and shows a distribution of spaces very advantageous for its purpose. The "City of Nürnberg" Building, from which so much had been expected, marks a distinct failure artistically, architecturally, and from the point of view of mere expository decoration. It stands directly opposite the entrance and its shape suggests a riding school. Next to the Machinery Building it is the weakest spot in the Exposition. All the other structures, architecturally considered, are very successful, adequately fulfilling their purpose and satisfying from an artistic point of view.

THE Arts Building, in its severe simplicity and lack of decoration, contrasts strongly with the usual ornate design for such a building. It is remarkable what an impression is produced by this renunciation of all ornament at an exposition where the decorative is expected. There are no moldings, no painting, outside of the lime-gray wash on the surfaces, no ornament of any kind. Mere masses and spaces are seen, most prominent among them a great central dome rising from a square turret. The corners of this central structure are dulled, and the dome itself runs from the four corners in straight lines to the middle line and there a stand is joined to it for a lantern with a purely ornamental covering. The whole structure evidently is contrived to carry out the fundamental idea of utility.

Similarly successful is the State of Bavaria Building. It shows the same lapidary style and utilitarian purpose, but finer architectural effects have not been neglected, especially in the main portal of the central structure. The court of columns on both sides of this is a morsel for architectonic voluptuaries; such capitals, so striking, so logical, so artistically precise, are not looked for at an exposition. Toward the top the central structure narrows to a cupola-shaped dome which is profiled in graceful lines, and on the upper platform of which four figures stand in a close group, supporting the globe on their shoulders. The dome is painted a bright green in imitation of copper, as also are the roofs of this building, the "City of Nürnberg" Building, and the Arts Building. Purely architectural ornamentation is renounced in the Bavarian Building, but the surfaces are decorated with modern paintings.

The weakest point in the architecture of the Exposition is, as already mentioned, the Machinery Building. From the beginning
From the Nürnberg Exposition

THE PALACE CHAMBER OF BAMBERG. DESIGNED BY FUCHSENBERGER. EXECUTED BY G. M. MÜLLER
From the Nürnberg Exposition

Exposition Building of the Bavarian Government
RUSTIC HOUSE BUILT IN THE ARCHITECTURAL STYLE OF ALLGAU
From the Nürnberg Exposition

METAL WORK FROM EBERBÖCH, MUNICH
not much was expected from it in the way of beauty, but it was intended to express massiveness and durability. It was thought desirable that the roof should show heavy, awkward corners instead of graceful arches, in order to produce an effect of ponderousness and sobriety, but in fact the impression it gives is that of having been cut from pasteboard. There is an extended, projecting balcony with brick-covered roof and gallery, the motive of which seems to have been borrowed from the old town wall of Nürnberg, and which is about as appropriate to a modern exposition of machinery as a feudal fortress would be for a chrysanthemum show. Far more successful is the great Industrial Building with its imposing length and the two corner towers, which to a certain extent recall its prototype at the Chicago Exposition.

Among the numerous minor structures of the Exposition the most interesting are the imitations of peasant homes. Perhaps the most noteworthy of these is the Weidenfels house, which contains four rooms completely furnished with products of domestic craftsmanship. The furniture is made in the local style of the peasants, etched and richly carved in flower designs, but showing no painting in colors. The first room has a decided artistic value, and is so distinctly modern in tone that it might just as well have been included in the Industrial Arts exhibition. The bedroom shows peasant furniture in the Biedermeier style.

The modern paintings shown in the Arts Building are mostly rather mediocre in quality, but the historical art exhibition in the Nürnberg Building is very interesting. The value of this section might have been greatly increased by a larger exhibit either of original examples or of copies, for not only the connoisseurs and amateurs but visitors from all countries seek here for the objects of greatest interest. Most notable among the exhibits are the celebrated Nürnberg Madonna in wood and the great altar carved in wood by Veit Stoss, a remarkable group in bronze of Hercules grappling with Antæus, and an Apollo well of the year 1532. This is the work of Peter Vischer, characterizing the German Renaissance, and represents Apollo as a powerful youth in the act of shooting with the bow. It is a companion piece to Albrecht Dürer’s Hercules shooting at the Stymphalian birds.
MODERN GERMAN FEELING IN ART

Very few examples of the Nürnberg industries are contained in the Industrial Arts exhibit. The Industrial Crafts Division of the Verein Frauenwohl contains some interesting examples of manual work by women, but nothing that is important as indicating any marked progress. The contribution that is most significant of the present trend of German art as applied to interior decoration and furnishing is the Palace Chamber of Bamberg, designed by the royal architect Fuchsenberger and executed by the firm of G. M. Müller, furniture makers of Bamberg. The Teutonic feeling is shown in the plain, massive effects that might be primitive were there not a certain consciousness of effort toward primitiveness. In seeking a possible model for this work the only name that suggests itself is that of Peter Behrens, whose spirit permeates this place, although he is not represented at the Exposition. The Palace Chamber shows an application of the lapidary style to the craftsman's art. The table and chairs look as if they might have been carved out of dolomite stone, and everything shows heavy forms and straight lines and corners. The material used is a dark bluish-gray etched oak, with the profile of the etching streaked with a crimson border. From top to bottom the walls are inlaid with panels presenting an even profile, and the paintings, the clock, and the closets are set in the walls, so that the style of decoration may justly be termed “interior architecture.” The chairs are covered with leather that harmonizes in tone with the wood and the only vestige of ornamentation is the mother-of-pearl inlaid here and there in the surfaces of the furniture.

METAL work has a strong representation in the Industrial Arts division. A number of prominent metal workers from Munich and other cities have put in noteworthy exhibits of copper and wrought iron, and some beautiful examples of work in the latter metal are shown by Kirsch, of Munich, whose work rivals that of the Parisian Robert. Among the examples of bronze casting is a bridal cup with salver, the work of Fritz and Ferdinand von Müller, and the gift of the City of Munich on the occasion of the silver wedding of the Kaiser and Kaiserin. Although the goldsmiths of Munich have made a very showy and costly display, they can not be said to have attained a high level of craftsmanship. The best work in this division, that of the atelier von Debschitz, can not however be included
in this general criticism, for it shows the best craftsmanship this year has produced. These ornaments in bronze and silver can be compared only with those of Japan, such is the refinement of taste shown in their shaping, so triumphant the mastery over the materials, so finely felt is Nature and so happily reproduced in its essentials. This impression of beauty is produced by the form and workmanship of the pieces, rather than by the richness or originality of the ornamentation. The handiwork of women in the Debschitz atelier is among the best of its kind. In the examples shown at the Exposition there is a subtlety and delicacy of feeling and execution such as we are accustomed to find only in the work of the Japanese.

It is a distinct drawback that the exhibits in the State of Bavaria Building are of interest only to the specialist. One of the principal benefits of an exposition like this is its educative influence on the public. The three great instruments of modern times for the enlightenment of the people are travel, popular universities, and expositions, and of these three expositions are incomparably the cheapest. It should therefore be the aim of the management to interest the layman, and to assist him in forming a clear impression of the subject. In the Machinery Building, for instance, which is of special popular interest, the value of the exhibition would be materially increased if an explanation were attached to each machine and each motor, as is done in the Industrial Museum at Paris.

An imposing show is made by the Bavarian, and especially the Nürnberg industrial exhibit, in which figure most prominently the ceramic industries, the wood and furniture industries, the textile industry, and the food industries. Some of the room furnishings here are of such merit that they well deserve a place in the Industrial Arts exhibits. The ceramic industry everywhere shows great progress, partly due to the number of technical schools which are springing up in Bavaria in imitation of Austrian models. The best examples of this work are furnished by the Royal Ceramic School at Landshut.

The exhibition of forestry, which has been left for final treatment, gives an excellent impression and is proving a strong attraction to the lay public. Happily, a steadily growing and deepening interest in forestry is evident among all classes of people in this country, and this exhibit bids fair to encourage greatly the general tendency to cherish and preserve the forests.