

CHAPTER TWENTY

ARCHITECTURE:

THE AGE OF CAPITALISM, IMPERIALISM, AND HIGH SOCIETY, 1870–1900

The United States was different after the Civil War. The bloody violence of the upheaval destroyed the innocence and optimism of the antebellum era, and the assassination of President Lincoln contributed to a mood of depression. Governmental scandals followed: President Andrew Johnson was accused of “high crimes and misdemeanors in office,” the Grant Administration was riddled with corruption, and the Tweed Ring in New York was exposed in *Harper’s Weekly* through satirical cartoons by Thomas Nast. Carpetbaggers were the scourge of the South. The failure of the banking house of Jay Cooke and Company in 1873 precipitated a panic that led to long years of economic depression, even as the captains of capitalism began their wars among themselves and with the laboring classes. As early as 1868 came the classic struggle of Cornelius Vanderbilt against Daniel Drew, Jay Gould, and Jim Fisk for control of the Erie Railroad. The next three decades saw an unparalleled expansion of railroads crisscrossing the nation, contributing to the rise of great Midwestern market towns like Chicago, St. Louis, and Kansas City.

Fabulous fortunes, such as America had never known, were made. When John Jacob Astor died in 1848, reportedly the richest man in the United States, he left an estate of twenty million dollars. But in 1902, Andrew Carnegie could give away half that amount to establish the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D.C., and in 1901, J. Pierpont Morgan organized the United States Steel Company, the first billion-dollar corporation. Fortunes were lost, too, for economic depressions occurred with sickening frequency. In 1884 and 1893 the banks, railroads, stockmarkets, and industries failed with devastating results. Despite such calamities, capitalism raced ahead, often failing to establish safeguards against abuses. Trusts were formed to obtain monopolies as with the original Standard Oil Company, the American Sugar Refining Company, and the United Fruit Company. The result was governmental intervention through antitrust legislation.

This was a period of social as well as economic unrest. The population of the country doubled in the thirty years

between 1870 and 1900. The Ku Klux Klan was formed in the South in 1868, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in 1875, and the social worker Jane Addams founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889. There were savage race riots in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and bloody anti-Chinese riots in California.

Labor rose to confront capitalism through such organizations as the Social Democratic Workingmen’s Party and the Socialist Labor Party, and through unions such as Samuel Gompers’s American Federation of Labor and the United Mine Workers. These groups fought for the eight-hour workday, the end of the “company store” system, and better wages and working conditions. Their efforts often brought them into bitter conflict with employers—for example, the coalmine, factory, and railroad strikes that began in the 1870s increased and intensified in the next two decades. In 1886, a bomb exploded amid an angry throng of police, anarchists, and labor demonstrators, igniting the Haymarket Square Riots in Chicago. Further violence occurred during the Homestead, Pennsylvania, steelmill strike of 1892, when Pinkerton Agency guards were hired by the company to contend with strikers. During the confrontation, Henry Clay Frick was shot and stabbed, but survived to form a great art collection.

At the same time, America, with its industrial, financial, and agrarian might, asserted its place among the great powers, accruing, by military means if necessary, territories around the world. In *Our Country* (1885), Josiah Strong theorized that it was America’s duty to become imperialistic. He was countered by Rudyard Kipling’s “The White Man’s Burden,” which attacked American imperialism after the Spanish-American War of 1898. It was in that war that America raised a new breed of hero—for example, Colonel Teddy Roosevelt, who led a cavalry charge of *Rough Riders* up San Juan Hill in Cuba to vanquish the Spanish forces, and Admiral George Dewey, who destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. America was soon in possession of the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island, and Samoa; Hawaii and Puerto Rico were then annexed, and American presence was felt in

Cuba after Spain gave it up as well. By 1904 the United States had acquired a 10-mile (16-km)-wide strip through Panama in which to dig a canal, so that its merchant and naval fleets could pass directly from one ocean to another.

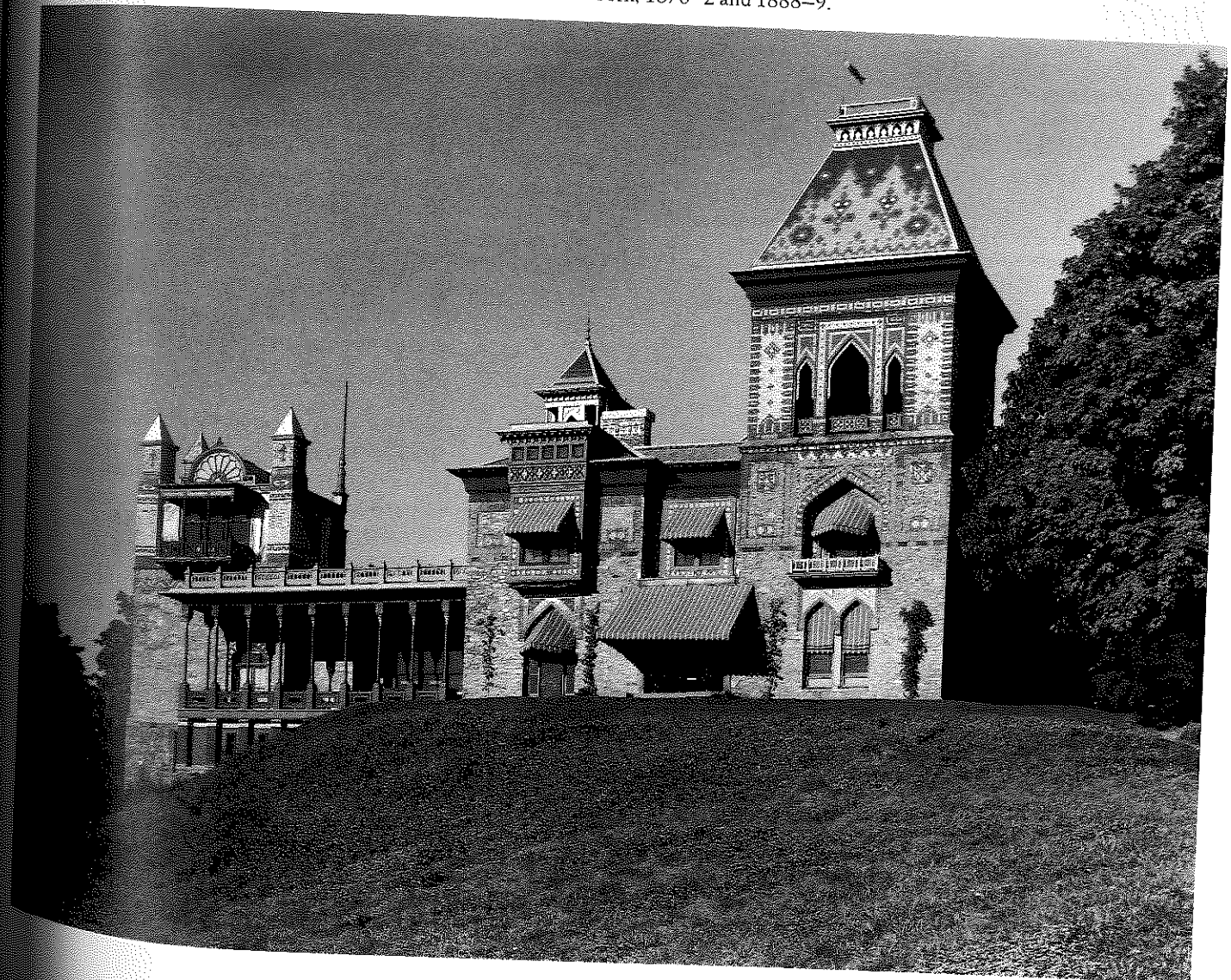
It is in the context of this vast panorama of growth and unrest, extraordinary wealth and depressing poverty, of railroads, factories, building, and inventing that the art and architecture of the era should be observed.

PERSIAN PALACES AND THE SECOND EMPIRE STYLE

The exoticism of mid-century continued, reaching its climax in the Islamic-Persian palace built for the landscape painter

Frederic Edwin Church high on a bluff above the Hudson River (Fig. 20.1). In 1867, Church and his wife embarked on an extensive tour abroad, which carried them not only to Europe but to Egypt and the Near East. Upon their return, they began planning their estate, which they called Olana—a name taken from an Arabic word which means “our place on high.” In 1870, Calvert Vaux (1824–95), the English-born architect and former partner of the late Andrew Jackson Downing, was called upon to produce the design, which combined Near-Eastern exoticism and picturesque irregularity in a grand expression of nineteenth-century Romanticism. Decorative patterns of multicolored tile and glazed brick, together with Islamic-style pointed arches, recreate the richness of a mosque. In the late 1880s, Church designed the studio wing, seen at the left of the illustration. He was also responsible for much of the decorative detail—mostly Persian and Syrian—as well as the wealth of the interior exotic furnishings.

20.1 Calvert Vaux and Frederic E. Church, Olana, Hudson, New York, 1870–2 and 1888–9.



SECOND EMPIRE STYLE

Eclecticism and the revival of historic styles dominated the architecture of this period. Such styles emerged from a number of European sources, most of which were French. Many young Americans received their architectural training at the famed *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, the fountainhead of tasteful design in the second half of the nineteenth century. They carried the teachings of the *Ecole* home with them, along with visions of Emperor Napoleon III's additions to the ancient palace of the Louvre, which defined the Second Empire style. They also returned with recollections of the French Renaissance and the Baroque era, such as the palaces at Fontainebleau and Versailles, and the beautiful châteaux of the Loire Valley. These same architects created the architecture of the American Renaissance—Fifth Avenue mansions, Newport "cottages," and palaces for libraries, art museums, railroad stations, and, finally, a grand exposition in Chicago that summed up America at the end of the century.

The Second Empire style originated in Paris. It was an expression of the spirit of Napoleon III's reign, and the new wealth of the bourgeoisie. The new architectural style found its fullest statement in the new Louvre of the 1850s, designed by Hector Martin Lefuel, and in that greatest display of nineteenth-century ostentatiousness, the *Opéra* (1861–74) by Charles Garnier. The style, based on French Renaissance and Baroque models, was characterized by the mansard roof, pavilions, and a richness of architectural and sculptural ornamentation.

In 1855, the financier and art collector William Wilson Corcoran visited Paris in the company of the man he had selected to design his gallery in Washington, D.C.—James Renwick, the architect of St. Patrick's Cathedral and the Smithsonian Institution (Figs. 13.16 and 13.17). Corcoran and Renwick wanted to familiarize themselves with the Second Empire style. Returning to Washington, D.C., Renwick designed the Corcoran Gallery (now the Renwick Gallery) in the mode of the new Louvre (Fig. 20.2). The central and corner pavilions are capped by low triangular or arched pediments and mansard roofs, and the entire façade is enriched with ornamentation and given a colorful aspect by the use of red brick and brownstone. To Corcoran, it seemed perfectly appropriate to build his gallery in the style of the French palace that held the greatest collection of art in the world. But it must have been a shock to Washingtonians. Here was the first real challenge to the classical style of architecture, which was the official mode of federalism. Virtually every edifice in the national capital was descended from ancient Rome. Corcoran's new gallery was clearly of a different spirit, and it set the fashion for the 1870s.

The Second Empire style was used for a number of important commercial, cultural, domestic, and governmental buildings in the 1860s and 1870s. Boston City Hall of 1861–5, designed by Arthur Gilman (1821–82) and Gridley Bryant (1816–99), was one of the earliest. The State, War,



20.2 James Renwick, The Corcoran Gallery (now The Renwick Gallery), Washington, D.C., 1859–61 and 1871.

and Navy Building (now the Old Executive Office Building) in Washington, D.C., was in its day considered one of the most beautiful and impressive buildings in America (Fig. 20.3). It has the characteristic pavilion system, mansard roof, and richness of surface which is derived exclusively from architectural decoration, not from sculptural ornamentation. The building was designed in 1871 by Alfred B. Mullett (1834–90), who designed about forty buildings in Washington, D.C., and was responsible for the postwar character of the capital city.

City Hall in Philadelphia is a gigantic structure, encompassing over 4 acres (1½ ha), with a central tower that rises to a height of 548 feet (167 m), making it on completion the tallest public building in America (Fig. 20.4). Its four Second Empire façades rivaled the architectural lavishness of the new Louvre. The lofty tower, however, is inconsistent with the French style, suggesting the soaring ambitiousness of America in 1869, when City Hall was designed by John McArthur, Jr. (1823–90).

Unlike Mullett's State, War, and Navy Building, nearly every part of City Hall has not only architectural decoration, but also a profusion of sculptural reliefs. These were the work of Alexander Milne Calder (1846–1923), father of the sculptor Alexander Stirling Calder (1870–1945), and grandfather of the mobilist Alexander "Sandy" Calder (1898–1976). Both McArthur and Calder were born in Scotland. McArthur was brought to America when he was ten and learned about architecture while still a carpenter, attending Thomas U. Walter's lectures at Philadelphia's Franklin Institute. Calder, however, had studied in Paris and London—where he had worked on the Albert Memorial—before coming to Philadelphia in 1868. Five years later, McArthur hired Calder to do the sculptures for City Hall, which occupied him for two decades. It culminated in Calder's 37-foot (11.3-m), 26-ton (26.4-tonne) bronze statue of William Penn, which was placed atop the central tower in 1894. The American quest for splendor, however, turned in other directions long before City Hall was completed, and by 1880 the Second Empire style had become passé.



20.3 (above) Alfred B. Mullett, State, War, and Navy Building (now the Old Executive Office Building), Washington, D.C., 1871–5.



20.4 John McArthur, Jr., City Hall, Philadelphia, 1869–81. Sculpture by Alexander Milne Calder.

HIGH VICTORIAN GOTHIC

An alternative style during the postwar decades was High Victorian Gothic. This was advocated by the English critic John Ruskin, whose two treatises on architecture—*The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and *The Stones of Venice* (1851–3)—were printed in American editions. Ruskin's message was that the essential purpose of great building lay in the decorative effect applied to the surface of structure, and that architecture should give pleasure to the senses. To Ruskin's mind, the colorful Italian Gothic style offered the best model for inspiration, and the Doge's Palace (1345–1438) in Venice represented perfection itself. When the National Academy of Design decided to erect its own building in New York City, the design employed revealed a debt to both the Doge's Palace and to Ruskin as the acknowledged arbiter of taste (Fig. 20.5). Regrettably the building no longer exists, but photographs show its use of the pointed, banded arch, a profusion of Gothic ornamental details, and polychroming achieved by the use of stones of different colors. Peter B. Wight (1838–1925), the architect, was in fact rather obvious in his borrowing from the Venetian prototype.

20.5 Peter B. Wight, National Academy of Design, New York City, 1863–5.



English and Irish buildings—such as All Saints' Church (1849–59, London) by William Butterfield, Trinity College Museum (1852–7, Dublin) and Oxford University Museum (1855–61, Oxford) by the Irish firm of Thomas Deane and Benjamin Woodward, and St. James-the-Less (1858–65, Westminster) by George Edmund Street—established the High Victorian Gothic style according to the gospel of John Ruskin. Within a remarkably brief period, the style had appeared in New York City at All Souls' Unitarian Church (1853–5), designed by a recently arrived Englishman named Jacob Wrey Mould. It was mainly after the Civil War that the style flourished in America. John H. Sturgis (1834–88), with his partner Charles Brigham (1841–1925), provided a bold statement of the style in his design for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (1870–6, destroyed).

In neighboring Cambridge, the firm of William R. Ware and Henry van Brunt created Memorial Hall (1870–8) for the campus of Harvard University, giving an ecclesiastical aspect to a building that was actually a theater and dining hall (Fig. 20.6). Memorial Hall seems to have a nave, choir, transept façades, and central crossing tower as well as Gothic lancets with pointed arches and rose windows, wall buttresses, crockets, and other Gothic paraphernalia. The

20.6 Ware and van Brunt,
Memorial Hall, Harvard
University, Cambridge,
Massachusetts, 1870-8.
Courtesy Harvard University
Archive.



basic form, however, is not medieval. It is too blocklike, and the mansardic roof on the tower displays the architects' willingness to combine styles into a mutant form. Both Ware (1848–1917) and Van Brunt (1832–1903) had been trained in the New York City office of Richard Morris Hunt, and in 1863 they formed a partnership, which for twenty years was the preeminent architectural firm in Boston.

20.7 Frank Furness and George W. Hewitt,
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania, 1872-6.



Frank Furness (1839–1912) also learned architecture in the offices of Richard Morris Hunt just before and after the Civil War. He then returned to Philadelphia, where he spent the rest of his career as a disciple of Ruskin. Furness's masterpiece is the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, his first important commission, in which he combined Ruskin's love of the Gothic and polychromed effect with the French pavilion system and mansard roof, plus sculptured reliefs in the Renaissance mode (Fig. 20.7).

The three-part façade has a central pavilion with a pointed arch encasing a rose window, with lancets reminiscent of the façade of a Gothic cathedral. Squat, truncated columns with ornate capitals give relief to the surrounding massiveness. The picturesque eclecticism and combination of several architectural styles were enriched by the effects of color and texture: Rustication was played against smoothcut stone, which was set in contrast to the gleaming polished surfaces of granite columns. Mauve-hued brownstone, pale-gray sandstone, red brick, and sometimes black brick contributed to the brilliant polychromy.

The variety of styles, colors, and textures in rich ornamentation characterizes the High Victorian mode, and distinguishes it from the unity of stylistic purity (where a single historic style prevails) that is found in the work of Richard Morris Hunt and the firm of McKim, Mead, and White. The interior of the Academy is especially rich in its coloration and the splendor of its surfaces—a true art-palace for the gilded age. Furness maintained a successful practice in Philadelphia, where most of the nearly 400 buildings he designed were erected.



20.8 Samuel and J. C. Newsom, William Carson House, Eureka, California, 1885. Wayne Andrews/Esto.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

The High Victorian Gothic style was popular in the 1870s and 1880s for domestic architecture as well as cultural institutions and commercial structures. This was especially so for homes of newly wealthy Americans. The style carried the banner of beauty and taste, and also lent itself to the display of affluence.

William Carson House That the style had spread to the West Coast is demonstrated by the William Carson House of 1885, in Eureka, California (Fig. 20.8), arguably the archetypal example of the High Victorian style. All the Ruskinian characteristics are displayed in lavish profusion. The relative restraint of the Pennsylvania Academy and Harvard's Memorial Hall is here unleashed to achieve an

appearance that can only be described as flamboyant. The Carson House was designed by two brothers, Samuel and Joseph Cather Newsom, who were born in Ontario, Canada, but established their architectural practice in the San Francisco area in the 1870s. Eventually, Joseph (1858–1930) went to Los Angeles to reap the rewards of the boom in southern California, while Samuel (1854–1908) remained in the Bay region. It is estimated that they designed some 600 houses and numerous churches and commercial buildings, mostly on the West Coast. Their designs were made known through the eleven pattern books they published between 1884 and 1900. Two additional masterpieces by the Newsoms are the Baldwin House in San Francisco and the Bradbury House in Los Angeles, both of 1887, where the spirit of the exciting, roaring boom years of California is manifested.

THE AMERICAN RENAISSANCE

The American Renaissance in art and architecture refers to the era from about 1885 to around 1920. It was a spirit that was less nationalistic, and more associated with European culture, particularly that of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. American millionaires saw themselves as the modern-day counterparts of European aristocracy, and wished to live in homes that resembled sixteenth-century palaces of Italian princes or seventeenth-century châteaux of French nobility. They wanted their clubs, libraries, train stations, and art museums to express a rebirth of the grandeur of European golden ages past. J. P. Morgan and Henry Clay Frick built a library and a mansion in New York City in the neo-Renaissance style. They filled them not with works by American artists but with Old World masterpieces from the Middle Ages to the Baroque.

The fullest expression of the American Renaissance was at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, but it found more permanent form in such projects as the Library of Congress, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Boston Public Library. Setting aside nationalistic preferences, the artists and patrons of the American Renaissance became cosmopolitan in their taste, employing the Beaux-Arts style to assert America's new internationalism. The American Renaissance was the mantle of culture that cloaked American materialism, industrialism, capitalism, and even imperialism.

RICHARD MORRIS HUNT

If the Carson House typifies the homes built for the wealthy upper-middleclass in this era, the architecture of Richard Morris Hunt and the partnership of McKim, Mead, and White exemplify the domestic, corporate, and cultural architecture erected for America's new millionaire society. Fabulously rich, the members of this fortunate set joyously flaunted their wealth, and lived in a manner that both emulated and rivaled the European aristocracy. Whether in their Fifth Avenue châteaux, their summer "cottages" at Newport, their temples of finance, or the cultural institutions they patronized, they used architecture as a symbol of their place in society, as well as their cosmopolitan sophistication.

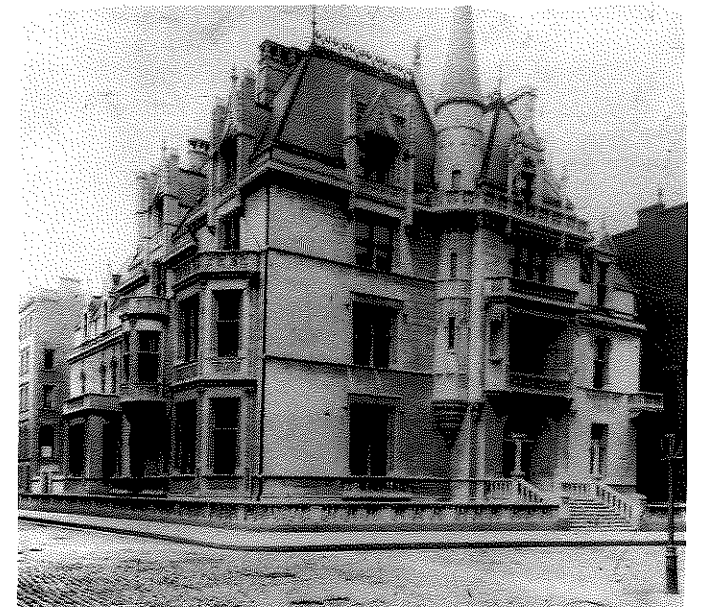
No architect better understood the taste and social ambitions of America's millionaire society than Richard Morris Hunt (1827–95), who was considered the dean of American architects in the 1880s and early 1890s. When he was sixteen, Hunt's widowed mother took him and his older brother William (the future painter discussed below) to Italy, before settling into expatriate life in Paris. There, in 1845, Richard was taken into the atelier of Hector Martin Lefuel, and the next year was admitted to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts—the first American to study architecture there.

In 1854, when Lefuel was made architect in charge of the new Louvre, Hunt was employed in the design of the Pavillon de la Bibliothèque. The next year the young architect returned to America to begin his practice in New York City. Hunt was kept busy designing grand homes for the wealthy of Manhattan, Boston, Newport, and Chicago. By the late 1870s, he had become the darling of America's Gilded Age society.

William K. Vanderbilt House In 1879, Richard Morris Hunt designed the first of his great houses, and the first of more than a dozen Fifth Avenue mansions—the William K. Vanderbilt House at 660 Fifth Avenue (Fig. 20.9). Until then, New York City streets were a dreary repetition of row upon row of brownstone houses, but the Vanderbilt mansion set a new standard of elegance, splendor, and stylishness—and it established Hunt's reputation. The pace quickened noticeably as the wealthy began to vie with one another in the grandeur of their townhouses and retreats. After drawing upon a number of historic styles for previous buildings, Hunt turned, for the first time in America, to the French Renaissance style of Francis I (reigned 1515–47). This style possessed enough lingering medievalism to provide a touch of the picturesque, and was known to American society through the splendid edifices of the great royal palace at Fontainebleau, and the noble châteaux of the Loire Valley, where there were also French Baroque mansions of aristocratic dignity—such as Blois, Chambord, Chenonceaux, Chinon, and Amboise.

The main feature of the Vanderbilt House was its uniform color and material, a gray limestone. This placed it in sharp contrast to the colorful High Victorian and Second Empire

20.9 Richard Morris Hunt, William Kissam Vanderbilt House, New York City, 1879–81. Courtesy The New-York Historical Society, New York City.



styles. Its decoration did not conceal the whole surface and structure, but rather was used as discreet adornment to architectural mass, wall, door, and window. The exquisitely wrought ornamentation is late Gothic, and the charming *tourelle* adds a delightful picturesque element. The roof is steeply pitched and irregular, also characteristics of the French Renaissance style. Inside, the house was lavishly outfitted in a variety of historical modes. The library was French Renaissance, but the billiard room was Moorish, the Salon was in the style of Louis XV, and the dining hall recalled the era of Henry II.

The impact of Hunt's French château—so expressive of Old World aristocracy, elegance, taste, and culture—is seen in a wide range of buildings in New York City, from the elegant Isaac Fletcher House (1899) by Charles P. H. Gilbert (1863–1952) to Napoleon LeBrun's (1821–1901) Engine Company 31 Firehouse (1896), to the noble Plaza Hotel (1907), designed by Henry J. Hardenbergh (1847–1918). By the turn of the century, there were no fewer than six grand Vanderbilt mansions on Fifth Avenue between Fifty-first and Fifty-eighth streets, with John D. Rockefeller's fine residence just off the Avenue, on Fifty-fourth Street, and William Waldorf Astor's mansion standing at the corner of

Fifty-sixth and Fifth. Unfortunately, most of these splendid Fifth Avenue mansions—including the William K. Vanderbilt House—were destroyed when maintenance became too expensive and the property too valuable for domestic purposes. The Vanderbilt House was razed in 1925, a victim of the encroachment of commercial establishments along Fifth Avenue.

Biltmore Richard Morris Hunt's fullest expression of the château style is the magnificent mansion called Biltmore, commissioned by George W. Vanderbilt and erected on a vast estate of 125,000 acres (50,586 ha) near Asheville, North Carolina (Fig. 20.10). Although the original source of inspiration was unquestionably the palace of Francis I at Fontainebleau, both patron and architect may also have known the English countryhouse Waddesdon Manor (1877–89), designed by Gabriel Hippolyte Destailleur for Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, the English scion of the great international banking house. At Biltmore, late-Gothic detailing of the French Renaissance style adorns a generally symmetrical, but irregular, building. Like its prototypes, Biltmore has a monumental staircase to one side of the main entrance. It is monochromatic, built of limestone, and

20.10 Richard Morris Hunt, Biltmore, Asheville, North Carolina, 1895.



20.11 Richard Morris Hunt, Banquet Hall, Biltmore, Asheville. 72 × 42 × 70ft (22 × 12.8 × 21.3m).

its steeply pitched roof is covered with slate. The celebrated landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted (1822–1903), who laid out New York's Central Park, was called in to design the grounds.

Inside, the scale and lavishness led one critic to christen Biltmore the grandest house in America. There are 225 rooms. The ceiling of the banquet hall rises 70 feet (21.3 m) above the parquet floor, and is given the appearance of a sixteenth-century European *grande halle* with the

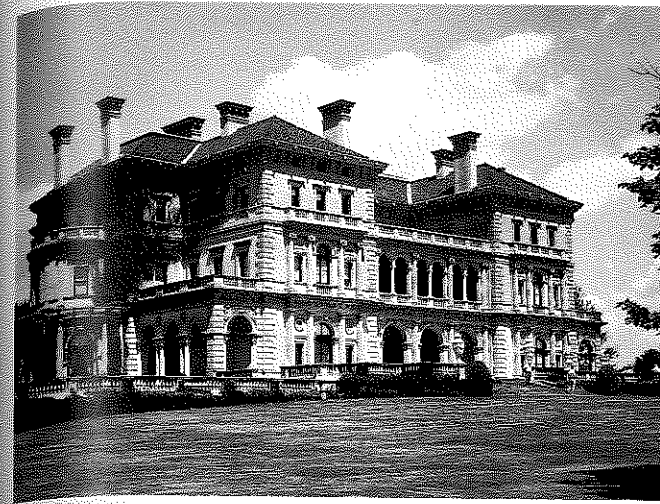
embellishments of flags and mooseheads, tapestries and animalskin rugs (Fig. 20.11). To suit the scale of the room, the fireplace was made in three parts, over which runs a great marble bas-relief. George W. Vanderbilt, grandson of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, was himself a student of architecture and a collector, and he filled Biltmore with the treasures he had gathered on several expeditions to Europe. The library, though smaller than the great hall, has handsome carvings and a ceiling painting by the seventeenth-



20.12 Richard Morris Hunt, Library, Biltmore, Asheville.

century decorative muralist Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini (Fig. 20.12). Vanderbilt, a welltraveled, studious young man of twenty-three, filled his handsomely outfitted library with over 20,000 volumes.

George Vanderbilt had inherited only ten million dollars when his father, William H. Vanderbilt, died in 1885, while George's brothers William K. and Cornelius II were bequeathed about sixty-five million dollars each.



20.13 Richard Morris Hunt, The Breakers, Newport, Rhode Island, 1892–5.

The Breakers George's brothers William and Cornelius commissioned Hunt to create mansions for them at that most fashionable of summer resorts, Newport, Rhode Island. The Breakers, residence of Cornelius II, was erected in 1892–5. In design it is a departure from the French château style, for it is based on northern Italian Renaissance models, especially palazzi of the Genoa area (Fig. 20.13). Hunt displayed his versatility by designing in the classical idiom with equal brilliance. The handling of mass, wall, and proportion, the sense of containment, the feeling for geometric form, and the elegant interpretation of classical details—such as columns, capitals, pilasters, round-headed arches, cornices, and balustrades—reveal the hand of a Beaux-Arts master at his best.

Within the Breakers, rooms such as the dining room rivaled the lavishness of European palaces of any era (Fig. 20.14). Yet homage was paid to the artistic traditions of

20.14 Richard Morris Hunt, Dining Room, The Breakers, Newport, c. 1895.





20.15 Richard Morris Hunt, Ballroom, The Marble House, Newport, Rhode Island, c. 1895.

Europe, for the dining room in the Breakers, and the ballroom (Fig. 20.15) in another of Hunt's Newport cottages, the Marble House (1888–92), reveal that Hunt looked entirely to historic European prototypes for the styles he used. It never occurred to Hunt to try to create a purely American style, totally free of any European associations.

Marble House Ballroom A recreation of the grandeur of Versailles in the ballroom of the Marble House, the Newport residence of an American railroad baron, seemed entirely appropriate. Here, ornate splendor is the keynote. Carved gilt bas-relief panels depict mythological scenes of gods and goddesses. Lifesize bronze figures, personifications of Youth and Old Age, perch upon an elaborate marble fireplace and hold candelabra, above which rises a great mirror. Enormous chandeliers are adorned with gilded cherubs. Door

enframements and cornices are similarly gilded, while mirrors above the doors reflect the light, glitter, and gilt of the ensemble. A new spirit of interior décor on a truly lavish scale had descended upon America—at least, on the homes of the privileged few who could afford such things.

Richard Morris Hunt was chosen chairman of the board of architects for the great 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. His own Administration Building anchored one end of the main axis. Hunt died in 1895. To honor him, nearly every fine arts organization and club in New York City joined together to commission the Hunt Memorial (1898), with sculptures by Daniel Chester French. It was originally to be placed near the façade of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which Hunt had designed, but its ultimate location was at Seventieth Street on Fifth Avenue, across from the Henry Clay Frick mansion.

McKIM, MEAD, AND WHITE

The firm of McKim, Mead, and White rose to the challenge of creating urban dignity and grandeur through a classical style that equaled the emerging American megalopolis in scale, organization, and expressiveness. In the age of iron and steel, the firm lent suave urbanity to a great municipal library or to an enormous railroad station. They did this by adapting the architectural theories of the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* to the social, cultural, and commercial demands of the American metropolis as if it were the Rome of the Caesars. At a time when cities were beset with social problems and with random sprawl lurching out of control, McKim, Mead, and White infused into them a sense of order, humane sophistication, and exquisite aesthetic taste.

Charles Follen McKim (1847–1909) studied at the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, where he learned about the integration of the arts—architecture, sculpture, murals, mosaics, stained glass—into a unified aesthetic scheme. He also learned about the organic organization of architectural spaces, especially as applied to structures or complexes of vast scale. After three years in Paris, McKim returned to New York City in 1870 to work in the office of H. H. Richardson. Three years later, he formed a loose partnership with William Rutherford Mead (1846–1928), who had just returned from Italy where his brother, Larkin Mead, was a sculptor. Mead, like McKim, had earlier spent a brief period

in the architectural office of Russell Sturgis. New Yorker Stanford White (1853–1906) worked for H. H. Richardson, primarily designing interiors for such major projects as Trinity Church, Boston (Fig. 20.27), before he joined McKim and Mead to form what would become the most successful architectural firm of the American Renaissance.

McKim brought to the firm a capacity for organizing vast projects, and the patience of the consummate perfectionist. White was an energetic and brilliant designer, with a special sensitivity to the integration of several arts in spectacular interiors. Mead, also a gifted architect, was the manager of the firm's many projects, and of the staff, which by the early 1890s numbered over one hundred.

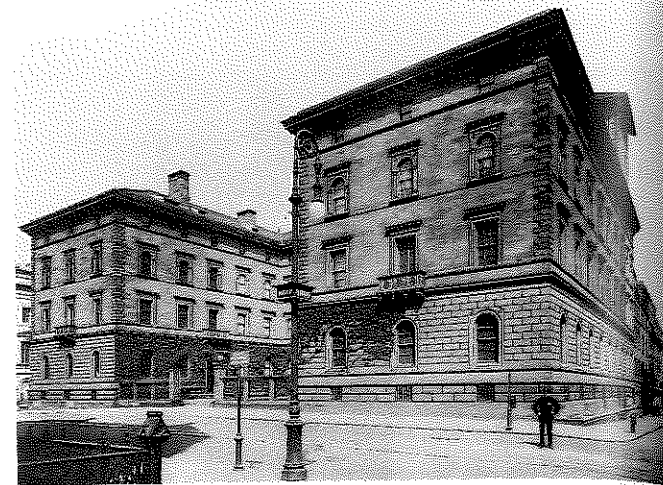
Shingle Style The early success of McKim, Mead, and White came at Newport, with houses designed in the Shingle style, such as the one for Isaac Bell of 1882–3 (Fig. 20.16). The Shingle style emerged out of the so-called Queen Anne style, a revival developed in England by Norman Shaw (1831–1912) and introduced to America through houses erected by the English contingent at the Philadelphia Centennial. More Elizabethan than anything else, the Shingle style had been used by H. H. Richardson for the Watts Sherman House (Fig. 20.24), on which Stanford White had worked. The Queen Anne and Shingle styles offered an informality for country or resort living that appealed to Americans.

20.16 McKim, Mead, and White, Isaac Bell House, Newport, Rhode Island, 1882–3. Wayne Andrews/Esto.



Houses like the one for Isaac Bell were sheathed with wood shingle, giving rise to the style's name and to a fine unity of walls and roof. All three members of the firm were interested in colonial New England architecture, including seventeenth-century houses, which were frequently covered with shingles. The shingle facing was in its own way the revival of an historic style, but now it was American rather than European or Near Eastern. Grand porches or verandahs, bay windows, and semicircular *tourettes* (derived from French farmhouses) completed the repertoire of forms and sources for typical Shingle-style houses. They were normally irregular and asymmetrical, but they could also be simple and monumental, as in the firm's house for William G. Low in Bristol, Rhode Island, in 1886–7.

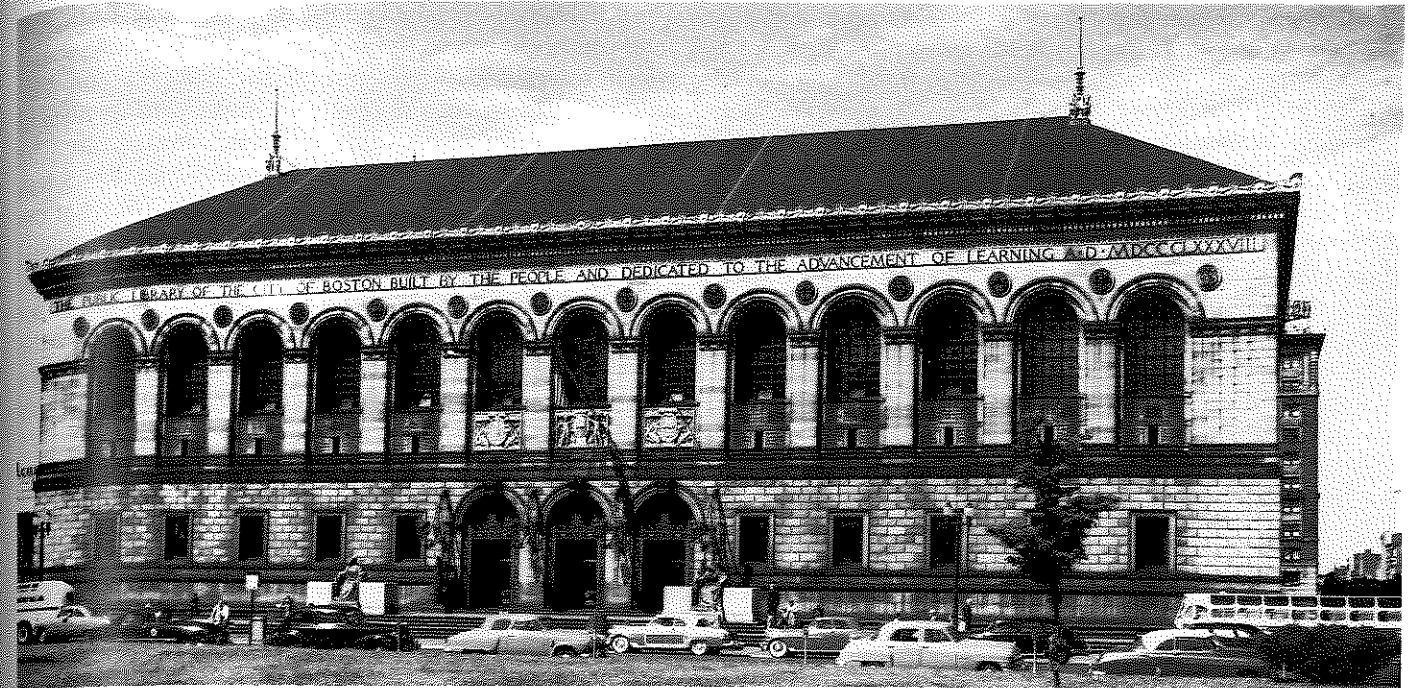
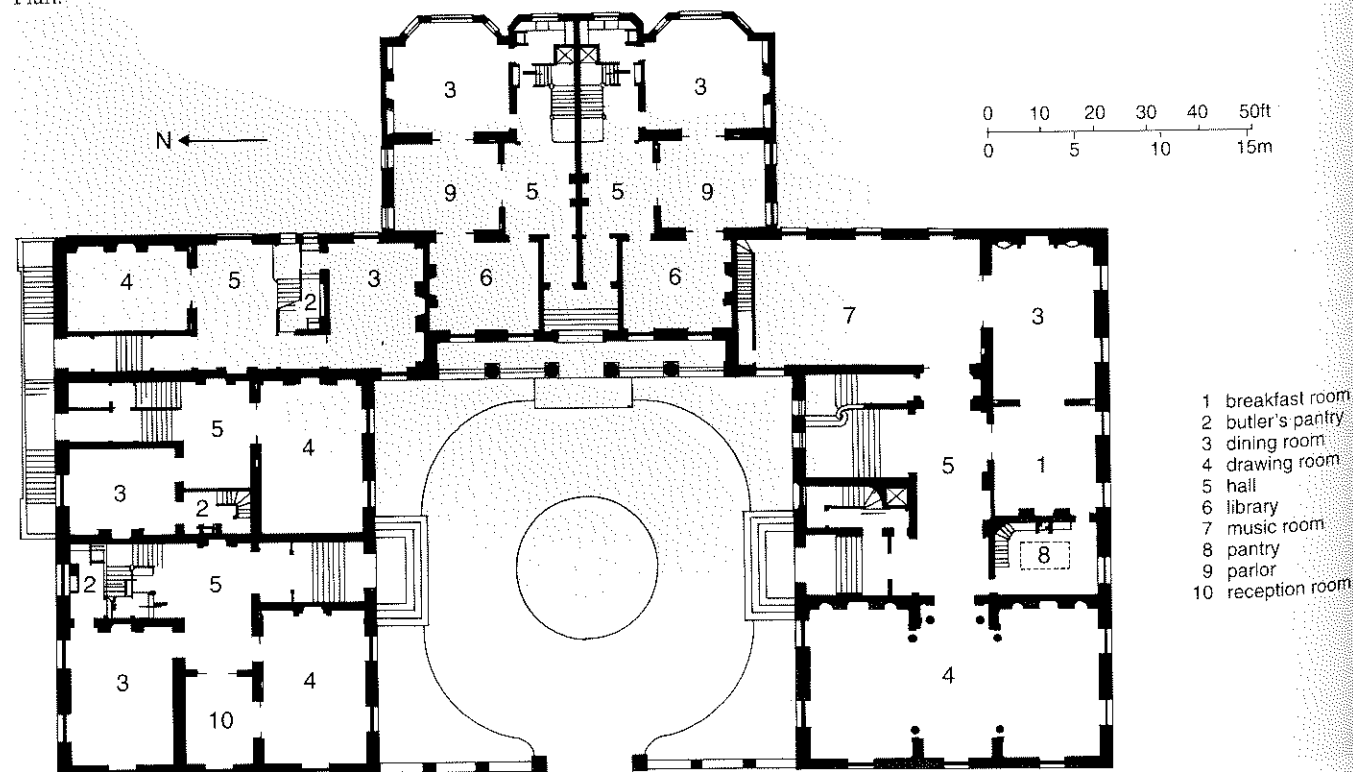
Urban Architecture It was in urban architecture that McKim, Mead, and White made their reputation and made their most profound effect. Their first great success, and the building that established the classical Renaissance palace as the source of their design for the next two decades, was the Henry Villard Houses (Figs. 20.17 and 20.18). Villard, president of the Northern Pacific, was a railroad magnate who wanted a great mansion as a symbol of his success. Six houses were united in a U-plan around an open court. The exterior design was based on the Chancery Palace in Rome. It had a boldly rusticated lower level and smooth surface for the two upper floors, and exquisitely framed classical windows. Stringcourse moldings and a handsome



20.17 McKim, Mead, and White, Villard Houses, New York City 1885. Courtesy The New-York Historical Society, New York City.

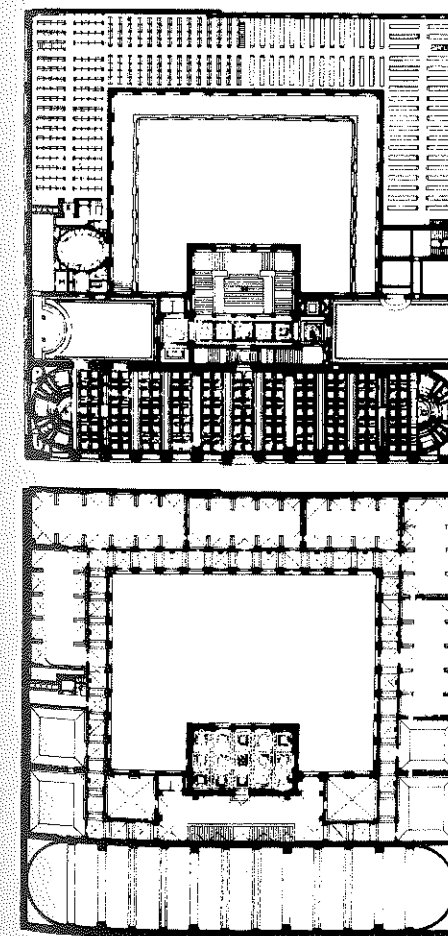
crowning cornice gave horizontal definition to the design. The building is indeed a modern-day American palazzo, with the details executed by the firm's most talented draftsman, Joseph Morrill Wells (1853–90). Within, the building demonstrated the Beaux-Arts concept of the integration of the arts, with White in charge of the design, sculptures by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and murals by John La Farge.

20.18 McKim, Mead, and White, Villard Houses, New York, 1885. Plan.



20.19 McKim, Mead, and White, Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts, 1888.

20.20 McKim, Mead, and White, Boston Public Library. Plan, as published in *American Architect and Building News*, 26 May 1888.



Public Buildings The Villard Houses was a prelude to one of the firm's largest and most successful projects—the Boston Public Library (Figs. 20.19 and 20.20). This imposing edifice was erected on Copley Square, opposite Trinity Church (Fig. 20.25). The archetypal High Victorian Museum of Fine Arts (destroyed) dominated another side of the plaza. There had never been a public lending library as large as this, and the firm seized the opportunity to create a palace of culture in white granite.

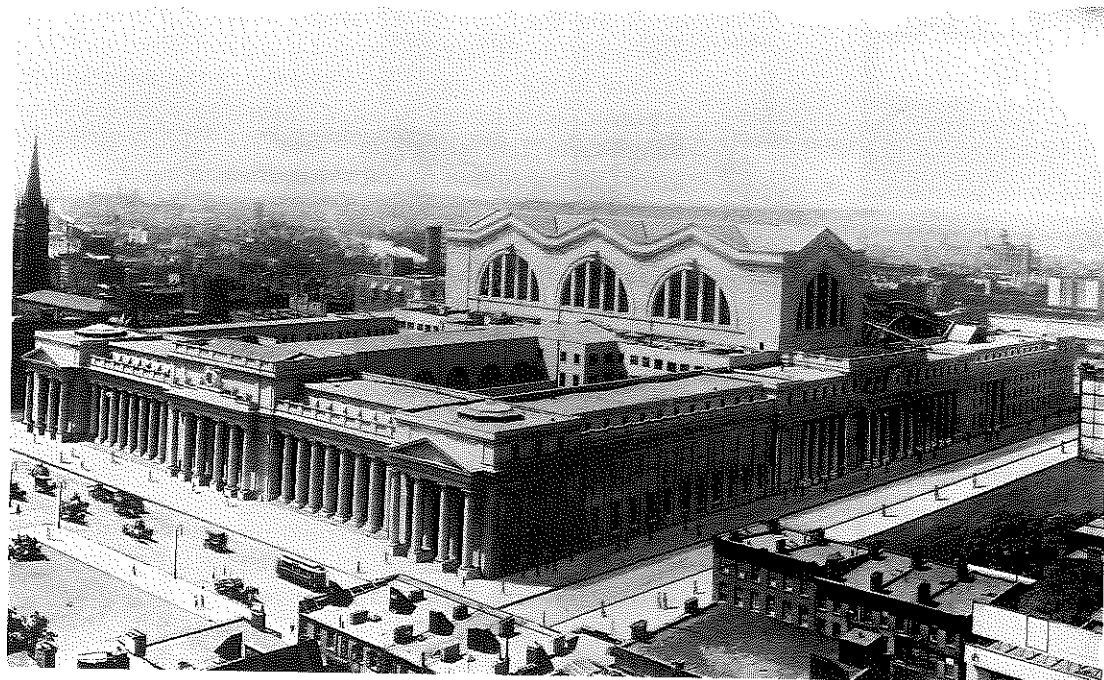
In plan, the building is a square with a large, open central court, like the *cortile* of the Medici Palace in Florence. The trustees of the library had in fact initially referred to it as a “palace of the people.” The elevation of the main façade, however, is indebted to Henri Labrousse's *Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève* (1850) in Paris. The design is united across the breadth of the façade by the continuous rustication of the lower floor and the procession of monumental, arched windows of the upper level, with the tripartite entrance echoing the arcade above it. The splendid detailing is again the work of Joseph M. Wells. The equally palatial interior has murals by Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (1824–98), John Singer Sargent, and Edwin Austin Abbey (Fig. 24.13), while Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Daniel Chester French made sculptures for it.

The Boston Public Library possesses a Renaissance-like geometry, simplicity, and monumentality. Well before it was finished, McKim, Mead, and White—as well as innumerable potential clients—realized that in drawing upon the Italian Renaissance the firm had discovered the very mode to express cultural dignity in the turn-of-the-century American metropolis.

Italian Renaissance architecture and its ancient Roman antecedents proved to be adaptable to a wide range of projects of greatly varying scale—whether for the Agriculture Building, one of the primary buildings at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago (Fig. 20.23), or the J. Pierpont Morgan Library in New York of 1902–7. The latter was built to house the extraordinary private collection of rare manuscripts owned by the financier J. P. Morgan, adjoining his mansion on East Thirty-sixth Street. This superb little white-marble structure was modeled on Ammannati's Villa Giulia in Rome, and its entrance reminds one of an ancient Roman triumphal arch.

Farther uptown, McKim, Mead, and White designed a new campus for Columbia University on a very formal, classical plan. Most of the buildings were erected at street-side, so a large, open, and spacious campus of lawns and walks is enclosed within. The buildings placed on the periphery of Columbia's great quadrangle were modeled after Roman palaces, while the mall is dominated by the magnificent neoclassical dignity of Low Library.

Perhaps the most demanding challenge that McKim, Mead, and White faced was the commission for Pennsylvania Station (Fig. 20.21). The Pennsylvania system, which previously had its terminal in Jersey City, had recently acquired the Long Island Railroad. Its president, Alexander J. Cassatt—brother of the American Impressionist Mary Cassatt—wanted a Manhattan terminal to service and link both lines. The result was a paradigm of logic and careful planning. One long axis allowed a freeflow of travelers moving through the station, while a lesser cross-axis accommodated huge numbers of people as a waiting room—the latter enclosed by enormous, high, coffered crossvaults resting on massive piers and colossal Corinthian columns.



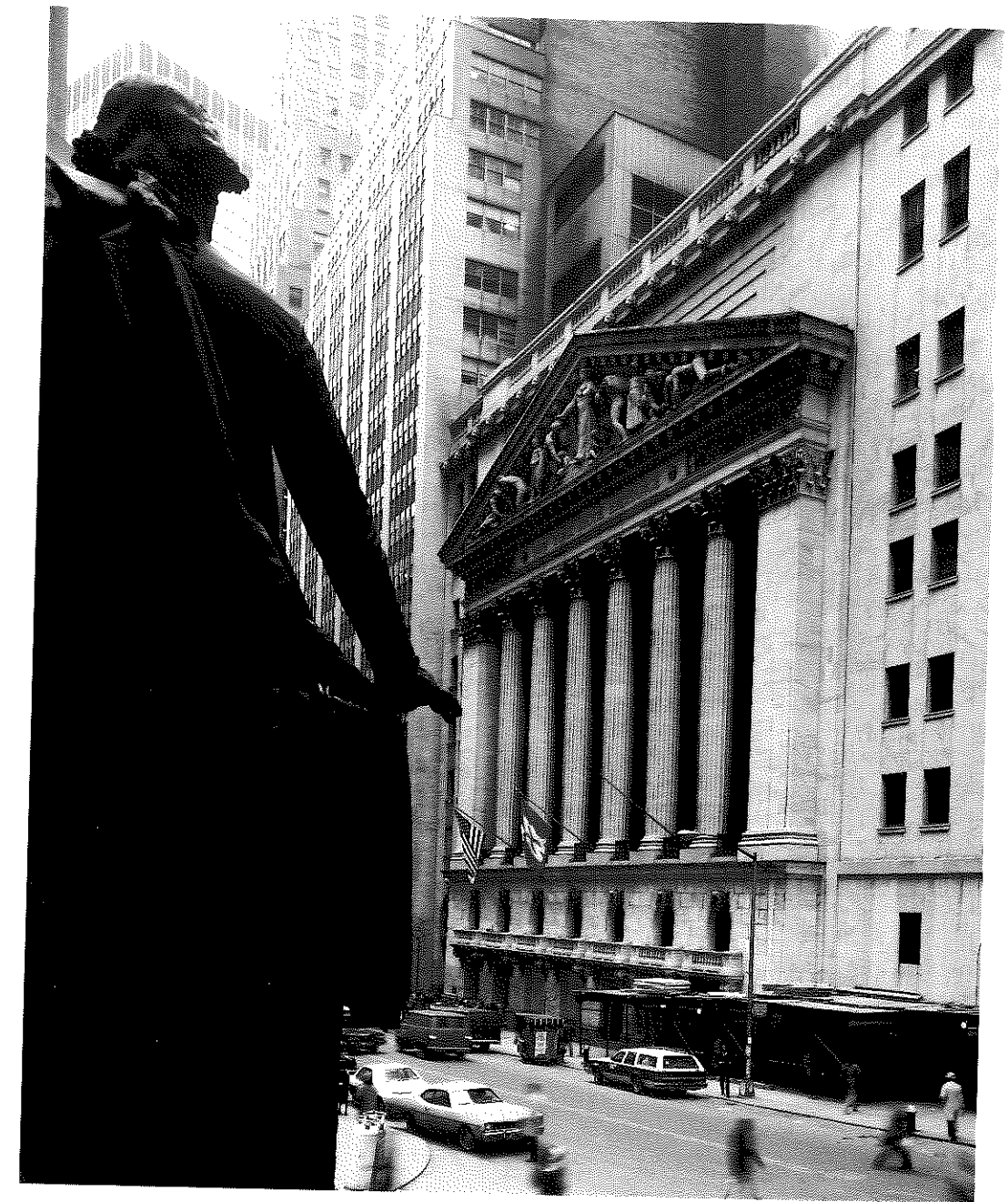
20.21 McKim, Mead, and White, Pennsylvania Station, New York City, 1910. Courtesy The New-York Historical Society, New York City.

The whole plan was based on the Baths of Caracalla (Rome, third century B.C.), and the vaulted area of the waiting room, which towered over the rest of the complex and was illuminated by eight large lunette windows, corresponded to the *frigidarium* (cold bath area) of the ancient structure. The four broad façades were unified by grand colonnades and long rows of pilasters, with temple-portico pavilions at the corners, and central entrances that resembled triumphal arches. McKim—probably the primary figure in the plan, scale, and design—conceived a building that would be an appropriate gateway to the great metropolis, express the importance of the railroad, and be able to hold its own against the skyscrapers that began to overshadow it. This station and its counterpart, Grand Central Station (by Whitney Warren, 1907–13), were proud emblems of their time. Pennsylvania Station survived until 1964, when it gave way to its modern replacement, surmounted by Madison Square Garden Center.

By 1910 the partnership of McKim, Mead, and White had executed nearly 800 commissions. It must be considered one of the greatest success stories in American architecture, yet it did not survive the first decade of the twentieth century intact. On 25 June 1906, while dining at a restaurant in the original Madison Square Garden (1887–98) which he himself had designed, Stanford White was shot by Harry K. Thaw, the jealous husband of White's paramour, Evelyn Nesbit. White's death and the ensuing scandal, exploited by the yellow press, took its toll on McKim, who died in 1909. Mead turned to traveling abroad, and retired in 1919.

Richard Morris Hunt and the firm of McKim, Mead, and White so dominated the architecture of their era that many other excellent architects tend to be overshadowed by them. Many worked generally in the same vein. George Browne

20.22 George B. Post, New York Stock Exchange, New York City, 1901–4. Paul Warchol/Esto.



Post (1837–1913), for example, had a long and distinguished career. For about two years he worked in the offices of Hunt before setting off on his own in 1860. He could design equally well in the French Renaissance style—as in his Fifth Avenue mansion for Cornelius Vanderbilt II of 1882–93—or in the Roman classicism of his New York Stock Exchange, with its pedimental sculptures by John Quincy Adams Ward (Fig. 20.22). The façade of the Stock Exchange was designed in the mode of a great imperial temple, and the marble figures in the pediment represent the theme of “Integrity Protecting the Works of Man,” which seemed perfectly appropriate for one of the great financial centers of the world.

THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, 1893

The grandeur that was Rome, so romantically envisioned half a century earlier in Thomas Cole's *Consummation of the Empire* (Fig. 15.3), found its reincarnation at the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893 to celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America. (The fair was held a year late because planning was not begun in time to get it organized and the buildings erected for 1892.) Many of the great names of architecture were associated with this titanic project, located on the shores of Lake Michigan. It heralded the rise of the Midwest as one of



20.23 The Great Basin, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, Illinois, 1893.

the mercantile and cultural centers of the nation. Daniel Burnham, a Chicago architect, was the primary consultant, and he invited Frederick Law Olmsted to assist in devising the master plan. This called for a Court of Honor on the main axis with a large lagoon at its center, enframed by buildings of classical Roman style (Fig. 20.23).

The architectural mode that prevailed throughout was considered a triumph for "eastern establishment" designers such as Hunt, McKim, Mead, and White, and Post. The Chicago School, led by Burnham, Jenney, Adler, and Sullivan, was evolving a very different style—one strongly influenced by the new technologies and materials. This was, in fact, one of the finest hours for the Beaux-Arts style in America, but it unfortunately did not last. Almost all the sculptures and buildings were constructed of staff, a mixture of plaster and straw or some other binding agent, and have not survived.

The far end of the Court of Honor terminated in a great peristyle crowned with a quadriga group by the sculptor John Quincy Adams Ward. Before it, on a pedestal in the lagoon, stood Daniel Chester French's colossal gilded statue of the *Republic*. The near end of the lagoon had the large fountain containing Frederick MacMonnies's *Barge of State* (Fig. 26.13). At the right stood McKim, Mead, and White's Agriculture Building, with Augustus Saint-Gaudens's *Diana*

perched atop the low saucer dome. Sculptures appeared throughout—at bridges, atop buildings, along promenades—but most of it disappeared within a year, exposed to the elements of a harsh winter.

An exposition such as this gave architects a unique opportunity to plan, dream, and carry out grandiloquent schemes. Sometimes the magic of their schemes found permanent expression in far-distant places long after the fair had closed. The World's Columbian Exposition was so impressive in terms of its planning, organization, and potential for urban renewal that it sparked the City Beautiful movement, the fruits of which many Americans enjoy to this day. Cass Gilbert, Daniel Burnham, and Charles F. McKim, for example, were all involved in retrieving L'Enfant's plan (Fig. 8.16) for Washington, D.C., at the turn of the century. The result is the present noble Mall, lined with buildings reminiscent of those at the Chicago Fair of 1893. San Francisco, rebuilding after the disastrous earthquake of 1906, benefited from the concept. So did Philadelphia, with its handsome treelined Benjamin Franklin Parkway extending from MacArthur's City Hall to the golden marble temple of the Philadelphia Museum of Art (1919–28), designed by Horace Trumbauer (1869–1938) with the museum's director, Fiske Kimball, as consultant.

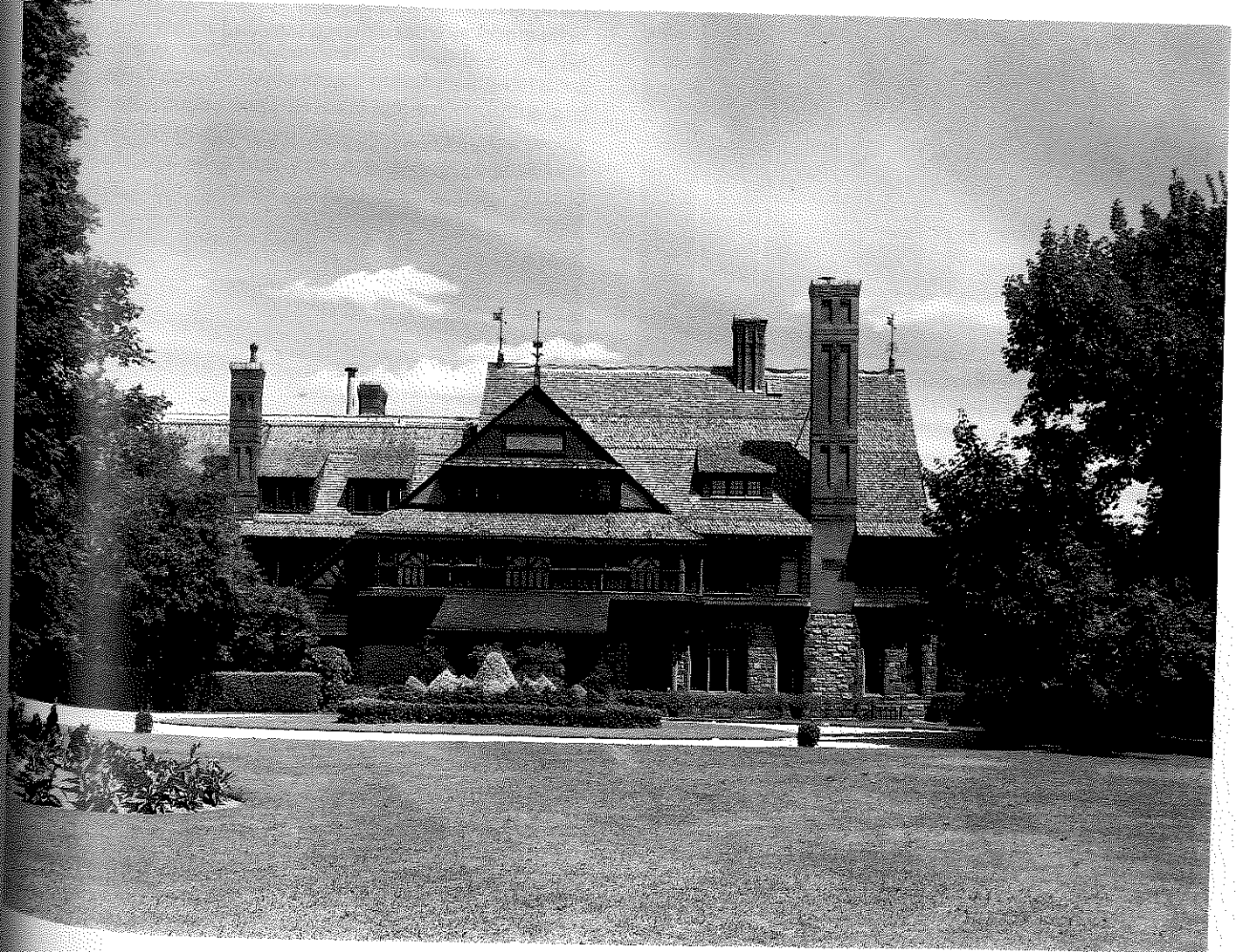
HENRY HOBSON RICHARDSON

Henry Hobson Richardson (1838–86) represents the transition from the eclectic, revival-style architecture of the nineteenth century to the new manner created by architects such as Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright. This meant a change from an essentially Beaux-Arts mode to an anticipation of Sullivan's form-follows-function theory, and Wright's organic Prairie House. Richardson, who was born in Louisiana, went to Harvard, where his interests turned to architecture during his senior year. After graduation, he went to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He also worked in the architectural office of Theodore Labrouste, brother of Henri Labrouste, architect of the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève. After this rigorous training in Beaux-Arts theory and practice, Richardson returned in 1865 to America, and settled in New York City.

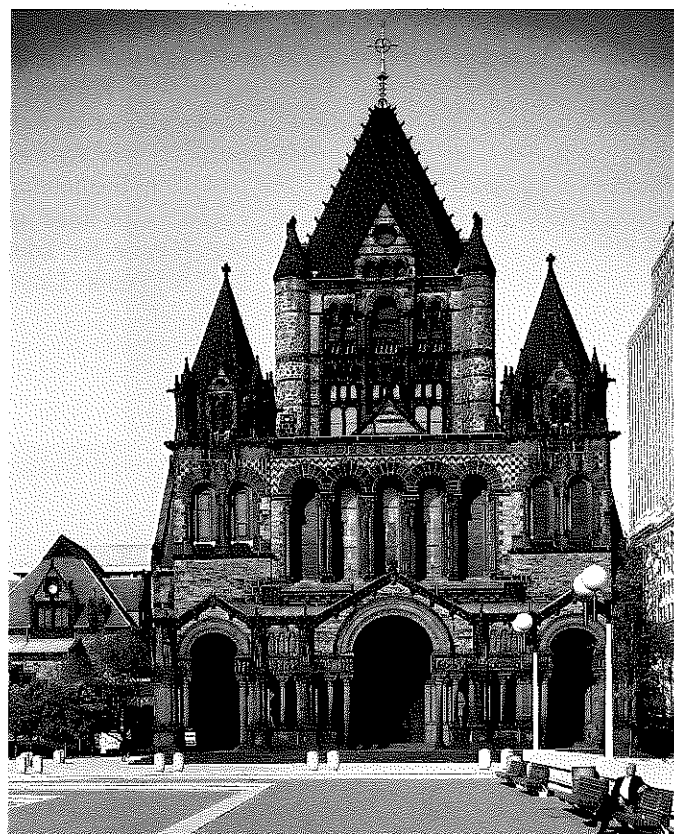
Picturesque eclecticism dominated Richardson's early work. His Watts Sherman House (Fig. 20.24) is the first

articulate example in America of the Queen Anne style which, as we have seen, originated in England, primarily in the work of Norman Shaw. The English architectural journal *Building News* published designs by Shaw in 1871, and soon after the Queen Anne style became popular in America. The main appeal of this house was in its picturesqueness and informality. The exterior is characterized by irregularity of shape and texture, with huge chimney stacks breaking the ridgeline of the steep, Gothic roof, and a large, projecting main entrance. Rough-surfaced, irregular, ashlar masonry gives way to shingle and brick above, while Old English half-timber designs dominate the entrance area. Historical associations with Old England made the style most appealing to America's new wealthy class of the 1870s. Within, the design was based on a new concept of open, free-flowing space, which broke with the idea of boxlike rooms lined up in a row. This concept had major significance for later domestic architecture, particularly that of Frank Lloyd Wright.

20.24 Henry Hobson Richardson, Watts Sherman House, Newport, Rhode Island, 1875. Wayne Andrews/Esto.

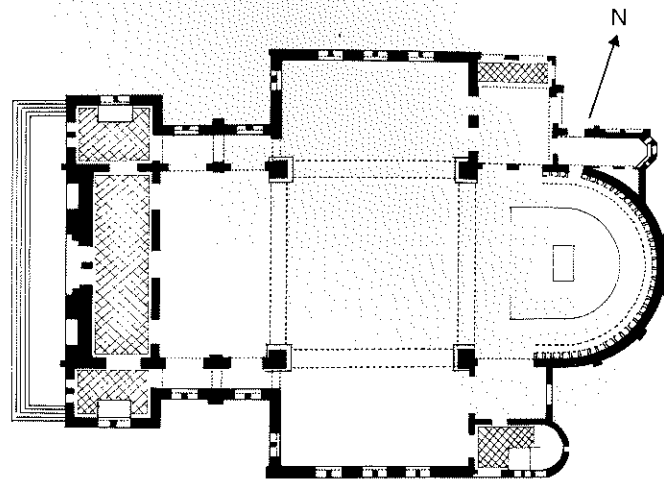


Trinity Church, Boston The supreme test of Richardson's creative powers in picturesque eclecticism came with the commission awarded in 1872 for Trinity Church (Figs. 20.25 and 20.26), erected on one side of Boston's Copley Square. Trinity's design is drawn from twelfth-century Romanesque churches of southern France and Spain. The tripartite entrances are indebted to Saint-Gilles-du-Garde at



20.25 Henry Hobson Richardson, Trinity Church, Boston, Massachusetts, 1872–7.

20.26 Henry Hobson Richardson, Trinity Church, Boston. Plan.



Arles, France, while the towering form of the central crossing is reminiscent of the cathedral at Salamanca in Spain.

The Romanesque Revival style had been known and used in the United States before this, but in Trinity Church Richardson gave it its most monumental expression, perhaps because of his love for bold, massive masonry, both as to structure and aesthetics. The reddish-brown granite has a somber presence, which is enlivened by sculptures and architectural detailing in the Romanesque manner. The round-headed arch is the unifying leitmotif, and irregularity of form is achieved by turrets, spires, crockets, gargoyles, and finials.

The interior of Trinity exceeds the exterior in richness of decoration (Fig. 20.27). Indeed, such decoration was unprecedented in American architecture. Most of the decoration was executed by the gifted John La Farge and his assistants, who provided not only the figurative and geometric paintings for the walls, but the designs for the brilliant stained glass as well. Through the broad but truncated nave, into the transept crossing—which soars 130 feet (40 m) to the ceiling of the tower—one is led to the semicircular apse, with its beautiful stained glass windows. There is a masterly manipulation of architectural space, with rectangular and hemispherical voids flowing into and interacting with each other splendidly.

20.27 Henry Hobson Richardson and John La Farge, Trinity Church, Boston. Interior.



20.28 Henry Hobson Richardson, Marshall Field Wholesale Store, Chicago, Illinois, 1885–7.

Marshall Field Store Richardson continued to use the massive, mural style of Romanesque masonry and detailing in smaller structures, such as local railroad stations and libraries. He became increasingly aware, however, of the abstract potential of ashlar masonry. His opportunity to explore this came with the commission for the Marshall Field Wholesale Store (Fig. 20.28). While Richardson may not have recognized the potential of new building materials and technologies as fully as he might, the Marshall Field Wholesale Store was nevertheless one of the most masterly solutions to the problem of largescale commercial architecture to date. There are still vague and general reminiscences of historic styles: The heavy masonry and round-headed arches are suggestive of Richardson's favored Romanesque style, while the total block of the building reminds us of a Florentine Renaissance palace, for example the Rucellai or the Medici. Overpowering these historical associations, however, is a new concept of design. This is based on abstract principles inherent in structure, and on a simplification of form that eliminates most decorative detailing. The demands placed on him by his patron may well have brought Richardson to this austere economy of means, for Marshall Field was a hardnosed, no-nonsense businessman, with an enduring concern for profit, and a merchant's anxiety over costs. Such concerns of the marketplace had a profound impact on the development of an architectural style that offered an economic alternative to the expensive revival styles.

Simplicity of form and a superb organization of structural parts and openings characterize the design of the Marshall Field Store. This takes the form of a box, the pure geometry

of which is not disrupted by elaborate details or protuberances, such as a heavy cornice or projecting pavilions. The sheer flatness of the walls is relieved by the rustication, which becomes lighter in the upper portions. Richardson's favored medium of rough-surfaced ashlar masonry is used, but with a new concept in architectural design.

If the mural planes are devoutly respected, it is only with the greatest care that they are penetrated with fenestration and doorways. Richardson placed enormous, bold piers at the corners, which helped to establish both the simple box-form and the plane of the wall. Lesser, but still bold, piers between the windows extend the full height of the building. Piers and windows form a vertical alignment, and their vertical accent is in perfect balance with the horizontal forces in the design.

Each bay is identical to its neighbor, except where an entrance replaces a groundfloor window in the center of the long wall—but the doorway is unobtrusive and does not disrupt the unity of the plane. Each seven-story bay has one large opening on the ground level, then a stringcourse, above which comes a taller opening that encompasses three floors, capped by a great round-headed arch. This zone is one opening wide by three high. In the next unit above, the pattern becomes two windows wide and two stories high—decreasing in vertical modules but increasing in horizontal parts. This scheme proceeds logically to the top floor, which is only one story high, but four openings wide. Therefore, above the stringcourse the design is, vertically, three stories, two stories, then one story, while horizontally its transformation is from one opening, to two, and finally to four. The logic and simplicity of each bay are combined with the unity of the total façade planes to create an architecture that is based primarily on abstract principles, rather than revived historic styles.

There was something new here, born perhaps of the sparseness demanded by the economic laws of the world of commerce. Louis Sullivan later admitted the influence this new concept had on him. Richardson did not live to see the Marshall Field Wholesale Store completed, for he died in 1886, a year before it was finished. One cannot but wonder what he might have brought to his next venture. For all it accomplished, however, the Marshall Field Wholesale Store did not make full use of the new technologies that were already known or then developing—cast-iron skeletal systems, Bessemer steel, reinforced concrete, curtain walls of glass, and so on. Richardson was so strongly wedded to Beaux-Arts practices and stone masonry that he did not probe these exciting new areas, which in fact involved engineering as much as Beaux-Arts training in architectural design.

The new technologies and engineering practices produced a new breed of architect and architectural design that laid the foundation for modern architecture, leading the way out of the historic revival styles that had dominated nineteenth-century design.