

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA FROM THE WORLD'S FAMOUS ARCHITECTS



M. BENARD, THE DISTINGUISHED FRENCH ARCHITECT, THE WINNER OF THE PHEBE A. HEARST COMPETITION.

The preliminary competition, which the jury threw out twenty-three more to eleven. All of these were of them received prizes. Six of which and one Swiss.

Two winners were invited to call on the site, and most of them went. The second verdict was to go to the architect of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris. The Council for Civil Buildings named: Paul Wallot, the designer of the Institute of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, and Regent J. The decision was finally rendered in favor of M. Benard, and four prizes as follows:

First prize, \$4,000.
 Second prize, \$2,000.
 Third prize, \$1,000.
 Fourth prize, \$500.

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is one of the most distinguished architects of the world. He was born in Godeville, Seine-et-Marne, in 1857, and is a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris. He is the author of the design of the Palace of the Franco-American Club in Paris, the design of the Palace of Commerce in Lyons, and many other works.

He did not visit California, one of the most favorable attentions was its performance and the little streams in the design of M. Benard, and his design will be disturbed.

The general nature of the accepted plan is thus described:

Approaching the University from the bay side Mr. Benard's plans show immediately within the entrance what he has called the "Fine Arts Square." Three buildings are shown on the left—a school of fine arts, a university museum and an academy of music. On the right are but two buildings; one a theatre, the other a lecture hall, and between them undisturbed will be the grove of fine oaks which now contribute so much to the beauty of the University site.

Proceeding up University avenue on the left is the University library, with a civil engineering building in the rear and on the right the domed Administration building, with a college of mines behind it. Then still farther up the avenue the buildings are divided by that broad tree-lined boulevard into two groups. All those on the left are devoted to general education. All those on the right to rest and recreation. The dormitory buildings facing one another look down on a flower-bordered campus, and on a lower level to the south is a grand recreation ground with a truly magnificent gymnasium on the south side, sheltered from the heat and the winds, and on the east and west tribunes with rows of seats and proud pennant-bearing stanchions, such as suggest St. Mark's place in Venice. The statory in front of the gymnasium suggests athletic exercises, and the central entrance is a splendid arch whose crown rises level with the roof. Within the arch is a vision of a superb interior, a paneled, stiered dome, beautiful in color and exquisite in form. Each architect was required to provide detailed plans of one building, and it is this particular structure which Mr. Benard has chosen to depict. Broad driveways lead to the gymnasium from the south and curve around its eastern and western ends. Just across each of these latter roads a light bridge in the form of a graceful arch is thrown, and so connection is made directly between the gymnasium and two club houses.

On the north side of the main educational building is the agricultural college, with ample grounds for experimental work. Higher up comes the group of natural history buildings, and on the highest point reached by easy terraces is the university observatory. To the south of the last building, some distance removed, where fresh air can reach it at all times, is the infirmary.

The whole scheme shows breadth—there is no crowding and yet no waste, while creeks and trees and undulating surfaces are worked into the plan undisturbed, and are made to contribute their share to a beautiful entity. Some of the most imposing structures have colonnaded fronts and are embellished with towers on the corners, relieving the view when caught from above of any monotony of dead level.

As there were no limitations of cost it is not known exactly how much money it will take to carry out these designs. Of course, it is not expected that all of the buildings will be put up at once, but it is supposed that when they are pushed the total cost will not be less than \$25,000,000 or \$30,000,000. They are planned to accommodate five thousand students, about twice the

number now in the university. Some idea may be formed of the magnitude of the undertaking from the fact that the plans provide for from fifty to seventy-five buildings, of stone and marble. The grounds, too, are to be laid out to form part of the grand pictorial composition.

Some time ago Mr. Reinsteil said that about \$7,000,000 were in sight for a beginning. It is announced that Mrs. Hearst will erect at least two of the new buildings—a mining building and one for young women—and that Mayor Phelan and Miss Jennie Flood will put up one each. A man who refused to give ten cents under former conditions, is willing to give a million to connect his name with such a superb monument as this. There will be no trouble about raising money as fast as it is needed.

The members of the jury have expressed unbounded admiration for the plans. Said M. Pascal:

Really it has been a most interesting and most valuable competition. The task of rendering a just verdict was difficult, more difficult than any jury duty of a similar kind that I have thus far had the honor of performing. Not one of the plans exhibited had great merit, and there was no possibility of passing over any of them lightly. Last year there were a hundred odd drawings at Antwerp for us to pass upon. From these we picked the eleven competitors, and the task we have just completed was far more difficult than the first one. Among the plans first presented to us were many which could be discarded with slight consideration. Now, when we had at this second competition to deal with the best, the task was difficult, and yet I believe we have truly found the most suitable and best in every way. Some minor changes may be necessary in Mr. Benard's designs, but the general scheme is there, and is masterful. This competition has been quite worthy of the sums expended in its realization and of the grand intentions of Mrs. Hearst. The practicability of such a competition has been demonstrated, and its results cannot be measured alone by the grand buildings which the University of California will one day own.

Mr. Cook announced:

The standard of the drawings was very high indeed. Without exception, the plans were exceedingly interesting and gave every evidence of hard work, conscientious effort and remarkable talent. The jury was practically unanimous in its decisions on all the winning designs; in fact, I might say unanimously unanimous. We had in this respect the same experience as in Antwerp, and it has not always been so in the juries of this kind of which I have been a member. As to the winner of the first prize, all I need say is that the entire plan cannot be carried out for many years, but when finished and elaborated, as it will be, it will present a splendid entirety, toward which the builders will strive continuously and the object of the whole of this elaborate competition will have been attained. Unity has been arrived at in place of the disorderly, nondescript manner of buildings as they exist now at Berkeley, and as from stress of circumstances they are to be found on the sites of nearly all our universities.

One of the jurors frankly declared:

We concluded that the plans of M. Benard are better than any one of us could have done, or even better than all of us could have done in collaboration. When an architect goes up against a plan to judge it, his natural tendency is to put himself against the man who did it, and to ask himself, "What could I have done with that idea?" Under this test we had to acknowledge that Benard had beaten us. And the same is true in more or less degree with some of the other plans. M. Benard's plans are truly inspiring.

This competition has been a revelation to the people of California. Accustomed, like other Americans, to jobbery in the construction of public buildings, they have seen at last what an honest search for ideal perfection can accomplish. They have learned that it is unnecessary for the structures that embody the aspirations of a community and measure its civilization to be commonplace or hideous. No "pull" played any part in this award, and when the results are compared with the squalid efforts of political architects a people so practical as the Americans will not fail to profit by the lesson. Berkeley will stand forever as a civic inspiration.

The University of California will soon be the focus of the attention of the whole artistic world. No such ensemble as will be presented on the Berkeley hills has ever been gathered since the Ottoman hordes submerged the classic civilization of Constantinople.

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