

# BOMBAY'S FIRST IDEAL HOME EXHIBITION

## ARCHITECTS GIVE BOMBAY A NEW SHOW

### THE FIRST IDEAL HOME EXHIBITION

TODAY, Wednesday, the 3rd of November at 5-30 p.m., Mr. B. G. Kher, Premier of Bombay, has consented to open the Ideal Home Exhibition which is run under the auspices of the Indian Institute of Architects. For this occasion the Town Hall, scene of so many exhibitions in the past, is once again being put to good use in housing something of which Bombay will



Mr. P. P. Kapadia, President of the Indian Institute of Architects.

have every reason to be proud; the first architectural exhibition ever to be held in India.

Which is the type of home best suited to India? How can beauty and comfort best be blended in a style at once satisfactory to physical needs and pleasing to the eye? How can the housewife be spared some of the totally unnecessary drudgery known as "house work" and devote her time to the running of an, in every way

pleasant and efficient home? What has modern industry, in numerous new and fascinating materials, to contribute to the amenities of house and home? And—of perhaps more importance still—what are the best types of plan and layout, how can rooms be best arranged with regard to each other to form a good design, and with due regard to one's already strained purse? These and other questions of equal importance to every householder are being tackled by some of India's leading architects and firms, and the public will have a welcome occasion of judging for themselves of the extent of their success.

#### Its Importance

In an exhibition such as this there is an underlying importance which will not escape the shrewd; there is something here which is of vital significance. We are not speaking legally or politically, but socially; there is no mere superficial difference here, but one which affects the very mode of life of every householder in India. There has long been an impact between the Western mode of life, Western manufactures, Western methods, and the age-old established traditions of a country which, while readily accepting renovation in history when it was acceptable or necessary, has in essence maintained its own way of life, its social stability, when empires elsewhere were crumbling and the very nature of the rest of the globe was changing. But climatic conditions cannot change, nor can a social system alter, at the mere beckoning of

politicians and would-be reformers—nor yet, in the face of probably better conditions, of a better mode of life, of an industrial (and therefore financial) revolution can a country remain completely undisturbed. What good is there in the new, what of the old must be kept, and how can one combine the two to best advantage? This is the kind of problem with which India's architects have been concerned. Western thought, and methods, and way of life: Indian thought, and climate, and way of life—here is a definite conflict. It is too much to hope that India's architects can synthesize these two in one happy stroke. This, which has been occupying the best minds in literature and politics, in the arts and in social conditions for some three hundred years at least, cannot conceivably be resolved in one moment of happy inspiration.

A "zenana" and a bathroom with chromium-plated hardware cannot be reconciled so easily, for there lies a world of difference between them. So that if architects whose business it is to follow and even to lead the trend of social inclination, tend to be too "zenana" on the one hand with not a good word to say for the new, or too "bathroom" on the other, without due regard for established customs, that is to be expected. But architects, whatever their trend of thought, have a message to impart; and this they impart not in words, not in literature, not in pen and ink, but in stone and concrete, in design and plan. It is for us to interpret their meaning correctly. We must not forget that when a room, or a home, is designed in a particular way the occupants for whom it is built act and respond to it in one particular manner: change the home, change the manner. And this could even be expanded to: change the manner, change the social condition; change the very outlook the philosophy of life—and vice versa.

In mere words this may smack of the platitudinous, but when it applies to a whole people, to millions of living men and women, there is something here whose interpretation cannot escape any but the most superficial. Or it may at first sight appear incongruous to attach such importance to what is after all, a mere exhibition of purely architectural interest! but we must not forget that each member of the public sees in an exhibition of this sort that which he brings to it in preliminary mental equipment. If, for instance, Mrs. X—describes the "show" as containing "nothing else except a few bathrooms, my dear," this may be more a reflection on Mrs. X—'s mental equipment than on the exhibition as she describes it.

#### Last-Minute Rush Job

Yet if we can be permitted some criticism, there are definite signs that the exhibition is something of a last-minute rush job. There is perhaps too much emphasis on "the modern room" without its necessary corollary—"adapted and suited to Indian conditions;" there is an

evidence of too great a haste in the erection of some of the exhibits, and without too much regard for quality; of too hasty "planning," arrangement and make-shift on the part of the management responsible. We mention these points because, as members of the public, we cannot but have received the impression that an exhibition run by architects, designers and planners generally would set an example to the rest of India on how an exhibition should be managed. Yet, to be quite fair, it should also be mentioned that such an exhibition demands the closest co-operation between the management and the various firms of exhibitors, of months of preliminary work, of "sitting the



The Hon'ble Mr. B. G. Kher, Premier of Bombay, who will open India's first Ideal Home Exhibition.

dence" in a matter in the highest degree controversial, and fairly bristling with questions and questionable points. If the perfect exhibition on this matter has not been achieved in one first attempt, this is not to be wondered at. But we have here a first-class chance to judge of the attempt, if not of the finished product.

There have been some changes in the original planning of the rooms and spaces as they are marked in the plan of the exhibition which is included in this supplement. As an instance, that which appears as a Billiard Room in the plan will, we understand, be turned into a model Bedroom; that space which is marked as "a bus or tramway shelter" will be occupied by a modern Office; the spaces marked "kitchen, lobby, and bathroom" will be occupied by a Home Library; the space marked "Film Studio" will be divided into two rooms, one showing a modern film setting and the other a historical one; the rear verandah will be occupied, not with a Restaurant as marked, but with an Information Bureau for the benefit of the pub-

lic; there will further be no "Strong Room" and "Sound Room," but the whole of that space will be occupied with a Terrace Garden; a modern garage will occupy the space marked "petrol pump," and finally a modern "lounge" is included in the area marked on the right hand lower part of the plan.

So that as we enter we have a Lobby and Cloak Room facing us, followed by (on our right hand) a modern Drawing room and Dining room in some delicate shades of colour. Next comes a complete all-electric Kitchen and Bathroom, with the necessary equipment and materials. As we are about to turn the corner we have a Bedroom on our right and a Nursery facing us. The right hand wall, as we turn, is occupied with a gallery of architects' drawings, designs, and photos of work which has been executed, and here we can have an impression of that which India's architects are striving for. On our left we have, in order, a modern Shop, an Office, and another Bedroom, and then (could anything be more modern?) a Soda Fountain and Milk Bar. There are more architectural plans, designs, and

photos on our right as we follow the "one-way" traffic, then another Office faces us. We turn right once more and have a Drawing room and another Bedroom still on our right hand as we pass along, followed by a Home Library and what can perhaps be best described as "A Film Studio—ancient and modern settings." Any information as to the exhibition, the various rooms and firms and products which are being exhibited will be given in the rear verandah of the building, which is to our left as we pass along. Then follows a Roof Garden, with materials showing how such things are really made waterproof, to our left as we turn the corner and continue. We then turn left once more and view the last exhibit of all; a Lounge not originally marked on the plan.

#### Something of Everybody's Interest

There is plenty of interest in this exhibition for the householder, the alert member of the public, the commercial man, the architect, to anyone whose interest lies in the social and technical (and not merely

in the verbal) development of a country, there is something of import here. We can only hope that not all exhibitions conducted by the Institute of Indian Architects will be conducted quite so much under a bushel (as it were), but that this, which deserves at least to be a yearly fixture in Bombay, will get its proper recog-



Mr. Y. C. Merchant, Secretary.

nition and the publicity it deserves. Progress could thus become marked and rapid year by year.

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- ### LIST OF EXHIBITORS
- The following is a list of the firms responsible for the furniture, fittings, etc., on view at the Exhibition:—
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  - STAND 2. STAIRCASE HALL:—** Eastern Electric Light & Power Co., Ltd.—Lift and Electric Fittings. Raval & Co.—Marble Steps and Floor. Bhagwandas A. Bhawsar.—Furniture.
  - STAND 3. DRAWING & DINING ROOMS:—** Army & Navy Stores, Ltd.—Furniture, Fittings, Furnishing, Lights, etc., complete. W. McFarlane & Co.—Painting.
  - STAND 4. KITCHEN:—** Bombay Electric Supply & Tramways Co., Ltd.—Cooker and Fittings. Moderna.—Furniture, Suite and Draining Board. Johnson & Phillips.—Geyser. New Era & Co.—Painting.
  - STAND 5. BATH ROOM:—** Garlick & Co.—Bath and Fittings. Johnson & Phillips.—Geyser.
  - STAND 6. BED ROOM:—** Raval & Co.—Flooring Tiles. Gillanders & Arbuthnot & Co.—Painting. Alwyn & Co.—Steel Furniture. Eastern Electric Light & Power Co.—Electrical Fittings. Eastern Watch Co.—Electrical Clock.
  - STAND 7. NURSERY:—** Spencer & Co., Ltd.—Complete Furnishing, etc.
  - STAND 8. SHOP.**
  - STAND 9. OFFICE ROOM:—** Mody & Co.—Partitions, Tiles. Raval & Co.—Flooring Tiles. Godrej & Boyce Co.—Steel Furniture. Continental Typewriter Co.—Type-
  - writer and Lighting.
  - STAND 10. BED ROOM:—** Godrej & Boyce Co.—Steel Furniture. New Era & Co.—Paintings. Bharat Tiles & Marble Co.—Flooring.
  - STAND 11. SODA FOUNTAIN:—** Bharat Tiles & Marble Co.—Marble Steps, Finish in Colourex and Counter in Feather Crete. Mongini, Ltd.—Cold Drink Equipments.
  - STAND 12. OFFICE ROOM:—** Spence & Co.—Furniture. Allwyn & Co.—Furniture. C. J. Shah & Co.—Typewriter.
  - STAND 13. DRAWING ROOM:—** Garlick & Co.—Flooring Tiles. Moderna.—Furniture. Gillanders & Arbuthnot & Co., Ltd.—Painting.
  - STAND 14. BED ROOM:—** Raval & Co.—Flooring Tiles. Kalabhai Karsandas & Son.—Plaster of Paris Ceiling. Mitha & Co.—Furniture, Sewing Machine. Gillanders & Arbuthnot, Ltd.—Painting.
  - STAND 15. LIBRARY:—** Moderna.—Furniture. Jame Jamsheh.—New Papers.
  - STAND 16. FILM STUDIO:—** Fuzalbhoy, Ltd.—Studio Scene and Studio Equipments Complete.
  - STAND 17. TERRACE GARDEN:—** Raval & Co.—Flooring Tiles. Floor, Farapet and Shingles in Gardens. Army & Navy Stores, Ltd.—Furniture. Victoria Garden.—Plants.
  - STAND 18. LOBBY:—** M. S. Kopli & Co.—China Mosaic Floor.
  - STAND 19. HOSPITAL:—** Malgham Bros.—Operation Theatre Equipments Complete. New Era & Co.—Painting.
  - STAND 20. GARAGE:—** Yahya & Co.—Rolling Shutter Door, Car.
  - STAND 21. LOUNGE:—** Bhagwandas A. Bhawsar.—Furniture and Furnishings Complete.

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