



The street façade. The cantilevered walls, besides giving interest to the elevation, serve to screen each balcony from its neighbour.

A COLLECTIVE HOUSE AT STOCKHOLM

Architect: Sven Markelius

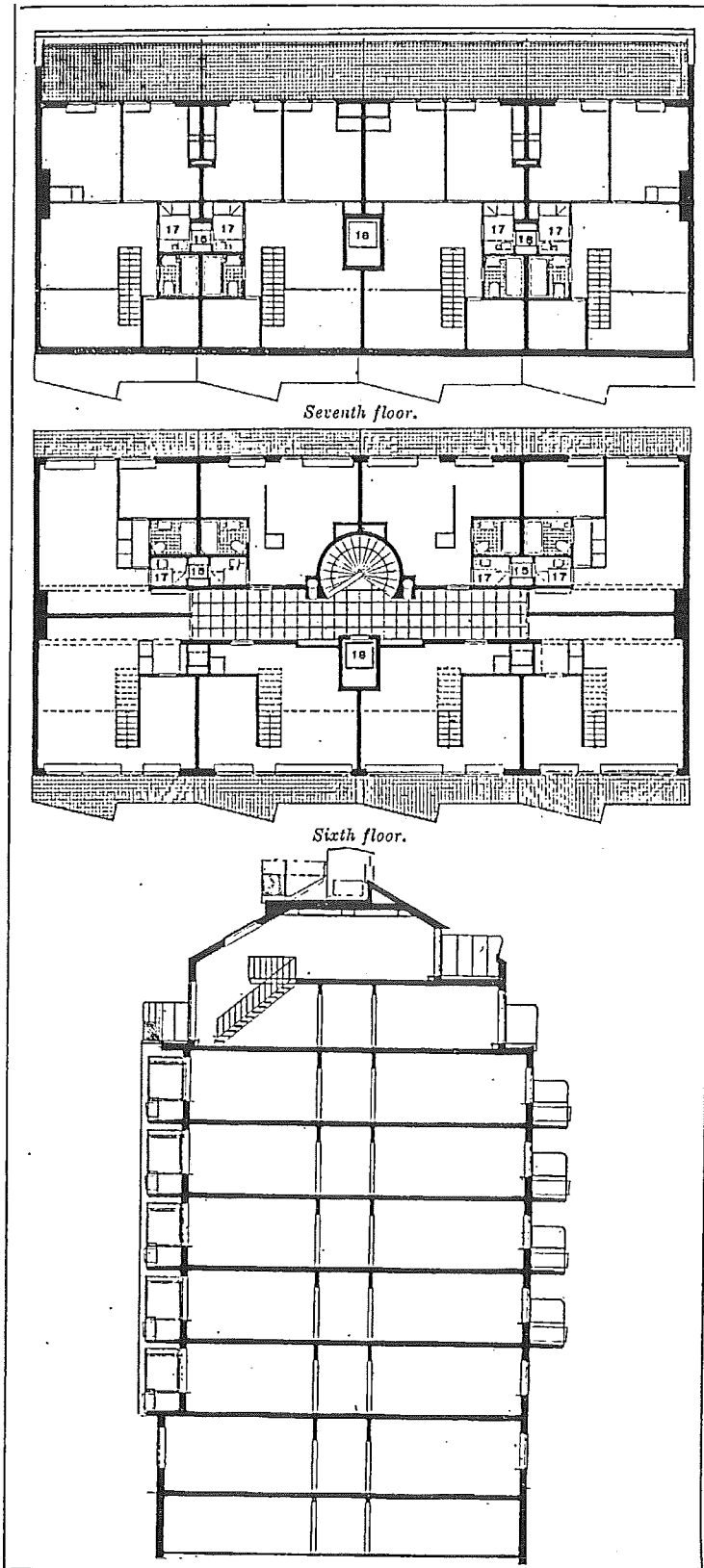
This collective house, which has just been completed at Stockholm, embodies an idea which, although not in itself original, in the hands of a Swedish architect has achieved poise and is transformed and improved beyond its previous limitations. The underlying idea of the collective house is that of a number of small households collected into an organised unit which looks after the common needs of its tenants. A particular improvement lies in an escape from the communal monotony too often characteristic of this type of building, allowance being made for individuality

within each flat. While these flats are not strictly "working class," they are designed for people who work, and primarily for families in which both husband and wife are employed. The mere fetish of "labour-saving" devices is not enough for the housewife who works during the day, and the new trend of family life demands radical changes which the collective house is designed to supply.

Layout of the Building. — The building is in seven storeys, consisting of fifty-seven flats, most of which are one- or two-roomed with bathroom and

kitchenette. In the upper floors there are a few larger mezzanine types of four rooms. The ground floor and basement are taken up by the centralised services. The restaurant, kitchen and nursery department, into which the children from each flat are collected when they are not wanted upstairs, together with two shops, occupy the ground floor. (The nursery department includes a play-room, an infants' sleeping-room, a night nursery for larger children, a treatment room, milk kitchen, cloak-rooms, etc.) A boiler-room, laundry, with warm-air drying apparatus, elec-

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tric mangle room, service store-rooms, machinery plant rooms, a general store and a lock-up store for each flat are in the basement.

Planning of the Flats. — The individual planning of the flats is varied, but they have certain points in common. All have inside tiled bathrooms, and all, with a few exceptions, have inside kitchenettes and hanging cupboards. Each kitchen is very well equipped with a gas cooker, a small refrigerator cooled from a central plant, a rustless metal sink and drainer, cupboards, etc. The floors of the flats are of cork, the walls and ceilings of the rooms oil-painted, and of the kitchenettes enamelled. A number of flats have open fireplaces.

Some of the plans, e.g., Nos. 2, 4, 6 and 7, are similar in type to those used already on the Continent (e.g., in Vienna housing schemes) and in American unit planning. In the others the planning is less rigid. It is rather space of varying dimensions divided by the service elements than an arrangement of rooms and their connections. The divisions for living, eating, working and sleeping are indicated as parts of the main space instead of being divided off into separate rooms. For instance, the triple cupboards in Nos. 1 and 5 have been boldly placed in the middle of the space, thereby making a small passage by which the bathroom can be approached either from the living or the sleeping parts of the flat, and also recessing the sleeping alcove.

Though spacially economical in the single type of flat, this planning is disadvantageous in flats designed for families with more than one child. Even with the communal nurseries it is difficult to see how family life is to be enjoyed for long in No. 4 or No. 2. The flats are, in fact, good examples of the maximum accommodation to be had in three dimensions, but if the fourth dimension of time is not carefully considered by the tenants themselves it is scarcely possible to avoid a good deal of congestion at certain times of the day.

The restaurant on the ground floor, though open to the public, appears to have rather small accommodation. Meals can be ordered here from the flats. It is pleasantly designed with white walls, yellow and buff textiles and woodwork of beech and oak.

KEY TO PLANS.

1. Terrace.
4. Entrance Hall.
5. Shop. 6. Shop.
7. Children's Playroom.
8. Night Nursery for Babies.
9. Night Nursery for Bigger Children.
10. Children's Washroom.
11. Store. 12. Sinkroom.
13. Kitchen.
14. Central Corridor.
15. Food Lift.
16. Restaurant with Quick-Service Bar.
17. Kitchenette.

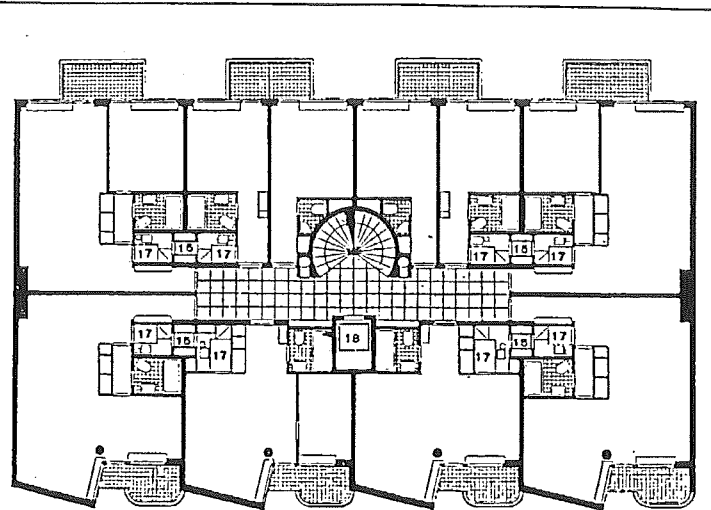
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Construction. — The building is formed of an internal supporting framework of reinforced concrete. This is composed of the two end gable walls, the partition walls of the flats, which are parallel to these, and the concrete beams which run between the latter and the gable walls. On the rear elevation, to the garden court, where the wall surface is flat, this supporting framework is supplemented by concrete beams laid across and cast with the partition walls. On the street façade, where the peculiar form of the walls makes this construction impossible, there is a supporting column in each bay. These are of mushroom type construction, and have been used in order to avoid having to suspend ceilings from the floor slabs.

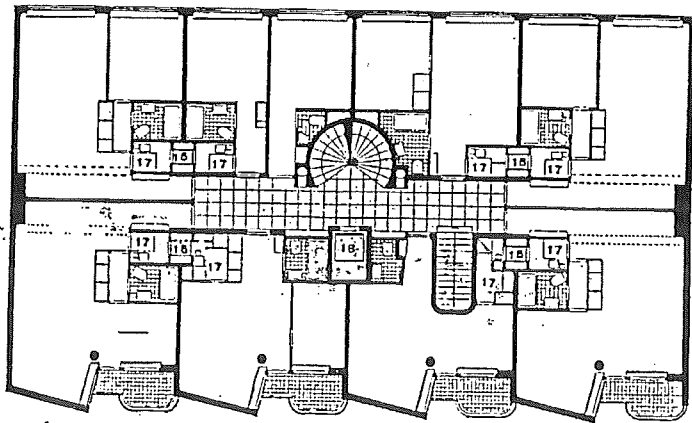
On the concrete framework of the building are laid across reinforced floor slabs of clinker concrete, approximately 6 m. by 6 m. and 18 cm. deep. Steel beams have been used only as secondary supports to floor slabs, and in the lift motor room, etc., the external walls do not function as supports, but merely as infilling between the floors, and it was therefore possible to consider them especially from the point of view of heat insulation. They are composed of highly porous brick, one brick in thickness (the walls including plaster and stucco are 28 cm. thick, i.e., about 11 in.). On the garden façade the concrete beams are insulated with Santorin slabs 7 cm. thick (about 2½ in.). The slabs forming the balcony do not penetrate this insulation but are cast between steel beams protruding from the floor slabs. The Santorin insulation is therefore broken only by these steel beams.

From the first-floor level the street façade is broken vertically by half the outer wall of each flat bay being inclined slightly outwards. This slant has two advantages, it serves as a screen to each balcony, giving it shelter, and privacy from its neighbours, and it also varies the pattern of the façade according to the position in the street from which it is seen. Balconies are an important feature of the design. At the back of the building, the balconies are much larger than those to the street, and in summer can almost be reckoned as an extra room. They are laid with Metlacher tiles. The external walls are covered with a cream colour-washed stucco. The same colourwash being used on the balconies and sheet-iron flower boxes. The only other colour, except for the details of the entrance, is in the flowers which are massed in the boxes on each balcony and at the main entrance.

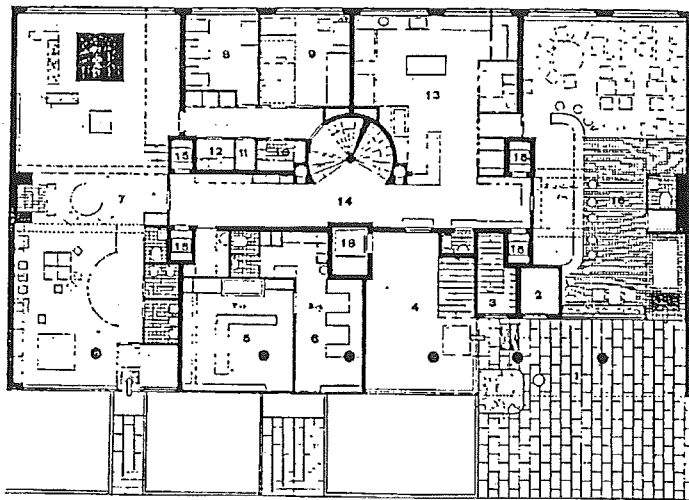
Equipment.—There is a passenger lift from the public entrance hall to every storey, and a laundry chute and a rubbish chute on every landing. The



Second to fifth floors.



First floor.



Ground floor.

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The rear elevation, showing the large balconies which virtually constitute an additional room.

whole building is ventilated by fans housed on the roof terrace, and under each window is a fresh-air inlet. The rainwater pipes are placed inside the building. There is central heating, hot and cold water to every part, main drainage and gas, electric light and power, and a local telephone service. The four food lifts connecting the central kitchen with each kitchenette are internally faced with stainless steel and have fireproof sliding doors operated from the kitchen by an automatic locking device, whereby the door can be opened only in that dwelling to which the lift is directed. Each flat has its own separate heating and water risers; this is to prevent the noise which occurs when branch pipes lead to each flat from a main riser. All

pipes are taken up special shafts, accessible in case of repairs.

Finishings.—All the joinery on the ground floor, in the open porch, vestibule, etc., is of oak, the doors partly faced with rustless steel plates. The walls of the entrance porch and the external walls up to window level are lined with Metlacher tiles. The floor of the entrance hall and first flight of steps are paved with limestone. The other stairs and landings are laid with 6-mm.-thick rubber tiles. Ceilings and walls generally are enamelled, and fittings are of chromium.

The Financing of the Collective House.—The total cost was about £43,600, including the cost of the site, which was about £6,400. The tenants formed their own building society and

advanced about 10 per cent. of the value of the flats by a premium. £5,130 was obtained from a State subsidy, the aim of which was to stimulate the building trade and decrease its unemployment. The rest of the money, which could not be obtained from the usual credit institutions, was acquired from a building firm in the form of a ten-years' amortisation scheme.

The scheme was put on an economic basis such that the rents, including the cost of the communal services, are lower than those of housing schemes of a corresponding situation and class. The services are given at roughly cost price owing to the same systematic economy. The charge for food and care of a child, for instance, is calcu-

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lated at one shilling a day, and the restaurant can compete with the cheapest "folk" restaurant.

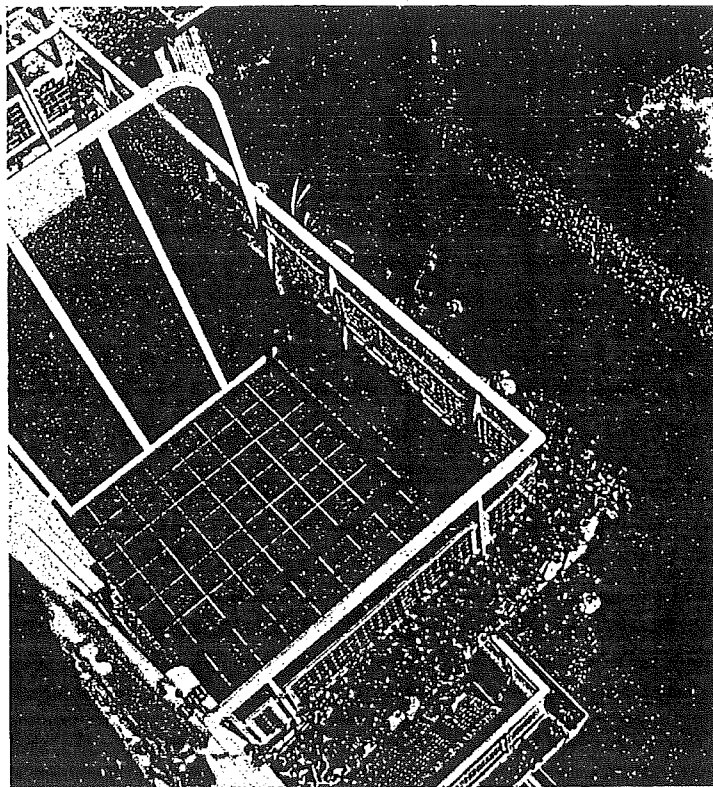
The building, which lies on the north side of Lake Malaren, is in a district lately developed with many blocks of flats.

Svenska Slöjdförening Exhibition
 —When the collective house was opened last summer, an exhibition of hypothetical ménages was arranged in eight of the flats under the direction of the Svenska Slöjdförening. As an exhibition of interior decorations for small houses it was excellent, for besides being undertaken by eight of the best decorating firms in Stockholm and therefore showing the modern trends, the cost of everything to the smallest detail was printed on the accompany pamphlet. It could be seen at a glance, therefore, that the schemes were in keeping with the supposed incomes of the proposed tenants. But it was the proposed tenants themselves who made it so interesting, practical and delightful a show. They occupied the flats in the following order:

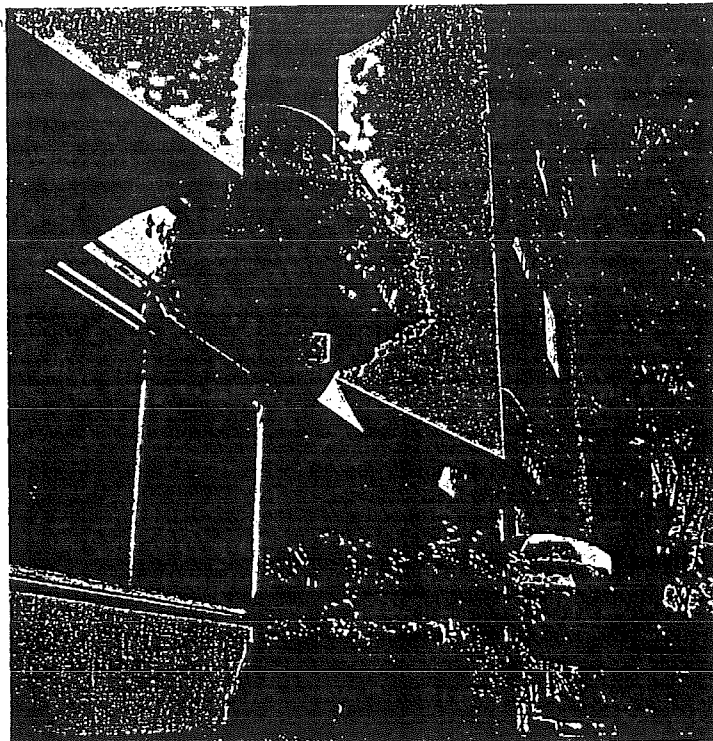
	Income Rent	
	£	£
No. 1. A well-known actress "with custody of the child"	410	67
No. 2. A telephone-operator, his wife (a dress-maker) and three children	260	67
No. 3. A disillusioned architect, resolved on celibacy	205	47
No. 4. A factory-office worker, his wife (a clerk) and two children (installed here till they can afford a country villa)	310	58
No. 5. A lecturer in economics and his amanuensis-wife. (They have decided against a family for five years while they devote themselves to the problem of the falling birth rate)	620	67
No. 6. A commercial correspondent and his wife (a department head in a fashionable shop) ...	515	67
No. 7. A shop assistant (spinster)	100	30
No. 8. A housepainter (bachelor)	154	26

It can be seen from this that the incomes vary from £100 to £600, and the rents from £25 to £67. The total furnishing costs varied from £45 for the smallest flat with standard furniture to £200 for the most sophisticated.

The chief interest, however, is in the variety of types of people who are expected to live in the flats and whose lives are to certain degrees, at any rate, to have a communal ordering.



One of the large balconies at the rear of the building.



A detail at street level, showing the canted walls.

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