

LOUIS SULLIVAN AS HE LIVED: The Shaping of American Architecture. By Willard Connely. New York: Horizon Press. 1960. \$6.50. Illustrated.

There is such a paucity of Louis Sullivan papers that we are grateful Willard Connely gathered what he could from those who had some connection with the architect. This is not a biography of ideas and Connely tends to the conventional acceptance of Sullivan as a father of modern architecture. Perhaps unwittingly he supports, however, George Ehrlich's assertion that Sullivan's architecture was more of an innovation in facade than in form. The biographer does capture the high drama of the young man whose career soared and then dropped quickly into the corn fields because his contemporaries were often obtuse and he was willful. Today Sullivan is a key study for those attempting to answer the question of what is the relationship of the arts to American culture.

KJLaB

DISSERTATIONS IN AMERICAN LITERATURE 1891-1955 WITH SUPPLEMENT 1956-1961. Edited by James Woodress. Durham: Duke University Press. 1962. \$3.50.

The graduate student looking downfield for running room welcomes any interference he can pick up; Mr. Woodress' volume provides a key block. Listing for this revision is perhaps a bit confusing--first come individual authors, 1891-1955, then general topics, 1891-1955; then individual authors, 1956-1961, then general topics for the latter period. But if this arrangement is less convenient than it could be, it certainly imposes no hardship on scholars using the book, and no doubt it saved the publishers a good deal of money and the editor a great deal of work.

Perhaps this review is an appropriate place to discuss a related problem: the graduate student or professor who uses Mr. Woodress' volume, finds a title which seems relevant for whatever he is working on, checks Dissertation Abstracts to pick up more information and then walks over to the library to arrange for a copy is usually confronted not by the sweet little old lady who handles exchanges but rather by the formidable and ugly machinery of the microfilm conspiracy. Most major universities now force their doctoral candidates to have their theses microfilmed; theses which have been microfilmed are not available on inter-library loan. Microfilmed dissertations must usually be purchased at the reader's expense. For the impecunious (and who ever heard of anyone in our field who isn't broke?),

this means spending a considerable amount of money to obtain works which more often than not turn out to be worthless for the problem which the scholar has at hand. It also means that when the rare roll arrives which is useful that the reader cannot take it home to peruse in his study: he has to read it in fifteen shades of dim gray on an apparatus apparently designed to make note-taking impossible in an overheated corner of the Afterthoughts Department of the library, cranking grimly backwards and forward to track down the headwaters of this ibid. or that op. cit., this "as was shown above" or that "as we established." Even the author of the thesis suffers; no longer can he sneak into the Archives for a furtive peek into his masterpiece and find there the illegible signatures of the truth-seekers. Orchestral musicians sign and date rental copies of contemporary works which they perform, and during my horn-playing days it used to give me pleasure to affix my scrawl beneath those of Mason Jones, James Stagliano and other notables of the French horn pantheon. Now mechanization has deprived us of the modest scholarly equivalent of this process; one can hardly scratch one's name on a microfilm roll, and if one could, to what end? The author will never see it.

Instead of making doctoral dissertations more accessible, in short, microfilm tends to bury them: entombed in their no doubt air-conditioned vault in Ann Arbor, they shall endure through the ages an invisible monument to the sacrificial rituals of the graduate process, placed there at the expense of the novitiate, and with the same spirit (though with less hope of resurrection) as that which moves men to stuff time-capsules with current comic books.

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