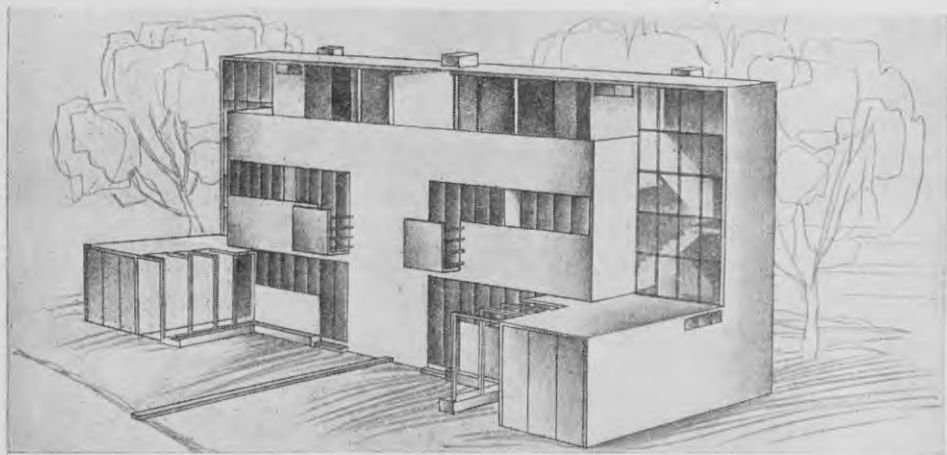


solid little cottage so rooted to the ground that it seems to grow out of it, should be like . . . what is there, indeed, that this modern kind of design and construction can offer us in exchange for such solidities? I think the best way to look at these strange modern structures is as machines designed to enable their owners to live in as much sunlight and air as possible. The garden and sky are, as it were, to be brought into the house and made part of its decoration. Most rooms, indeed, have one wall of glass, some have two opposite walls. Because the walls above these stretches of glass are thin stiff sheets on edge, no heavy beams of wood or steel are required to span them. The glass itself folds back like a screen or, in the more expensive houses, sinks into the floor as the windows of a motor-car . . . The result is a room facing the outside world as the auditorium of a theatre does the stage. It seems, indeed, to stretch out and embrace it. Hence such rooms need not be very big. Much smaller ones seem big enough when one wall is removed and when at the same time one lives with only the few moveable possessions the modern home calls for. The main advantage, however, of this construction is in the freedom it gives to the plan. With walls in one piece, an

upper floor can project out over a lower as in a mediæval home, only with far greater ease. Walls no longer need be directly above one another . . .

"A structure enclosing space by large sheets of cardboard, sometimes bent into semi-circles, especially one without chimneys or flues, is obviously not controlled in the same way as one built up of a vast number of small bricks and stones stuck together by mortar. The cardboard wall of the modern house is a concrete slab four to six inches thick threaded with thin steel rods and lined with cork or some other insulating material to keep the heat in and the noise out. The heat is the general heat of the whole building derived from a central source, reinforced at points by electric fires, so that the open planning, which the light stiff walls permit, is not interfered with by the necessity, say, to keep the dining-room door shut in order to keep the warmth in and the draughts out.

"Externally these new homes with their simple shapes of cube and semi-circle, devoid of sloping lines, it will be admitted directly one is accustomed to their first strangeness, suit the English countryside far better than the perky little villas or bungalows with their brilliant colours and restless outlines.



Connell and Ward's design for two semi-detached homes at Ruislip, the subject of an architectural cause célèbre.