

A GLIMPSE OF THE PALACE OF PEACE, JUST DEDICATED

From an Architectural Standpoint It Has Aroused Adverse Criticism, but It Is a Superb Structure, the Interior Being Especially Beautiful.

IT is quite probable that many members of the nationalities that are immediately interested in the erection of the Palace of Peace at The Hague, which was dedicated a few days ago, will be greatly disappointed in some of its principal features, not to mention numerous details which are also of a nature to provoke criticism from the lovers of pure art.

The Palace of Peace, as it appears to certain aesthetic authorities, is far from being such a representative specimen of modern architecture as would have seemed most fitting to its object. Indeed, it is wholly imitative of the architecture of another age, without the slightest effort at large symbolism of modern life. This is rather astounding, in view of the character of the man who gave the great fund for the creation of the Palace of Peace and of his adopted nationality, which is significant of the new and progressive, rather than of the old and retardative.

Some part of the causes of this disappointment can be readily explained. The Dutch are as much a daydreamer

by the Dutch Government, being excised from the Zorgvliet, and part acquired by purchase by the Carnegie Foundation, comprises a dense and rather picturesque grove, covering a slight elevation at the rear or north end, which is in course of embellishment according to the most artificial principles of landscape architecture, while a broad, level space in the foreground affords excellent scope for the exemplification of some of the finest effects of the famous Dutch methods of flower culture. Between these two stands the palace.

The total area of the grounds is about sixteen acres. They will present at the various seasons all the lovely contrasts and harmonies of nature's inimitable coloring, which, it may be hoped, will be the better set forth as the crude newness of the great mass of masonry of which they are the setting is softened little by little by the gentle alchemy of time.

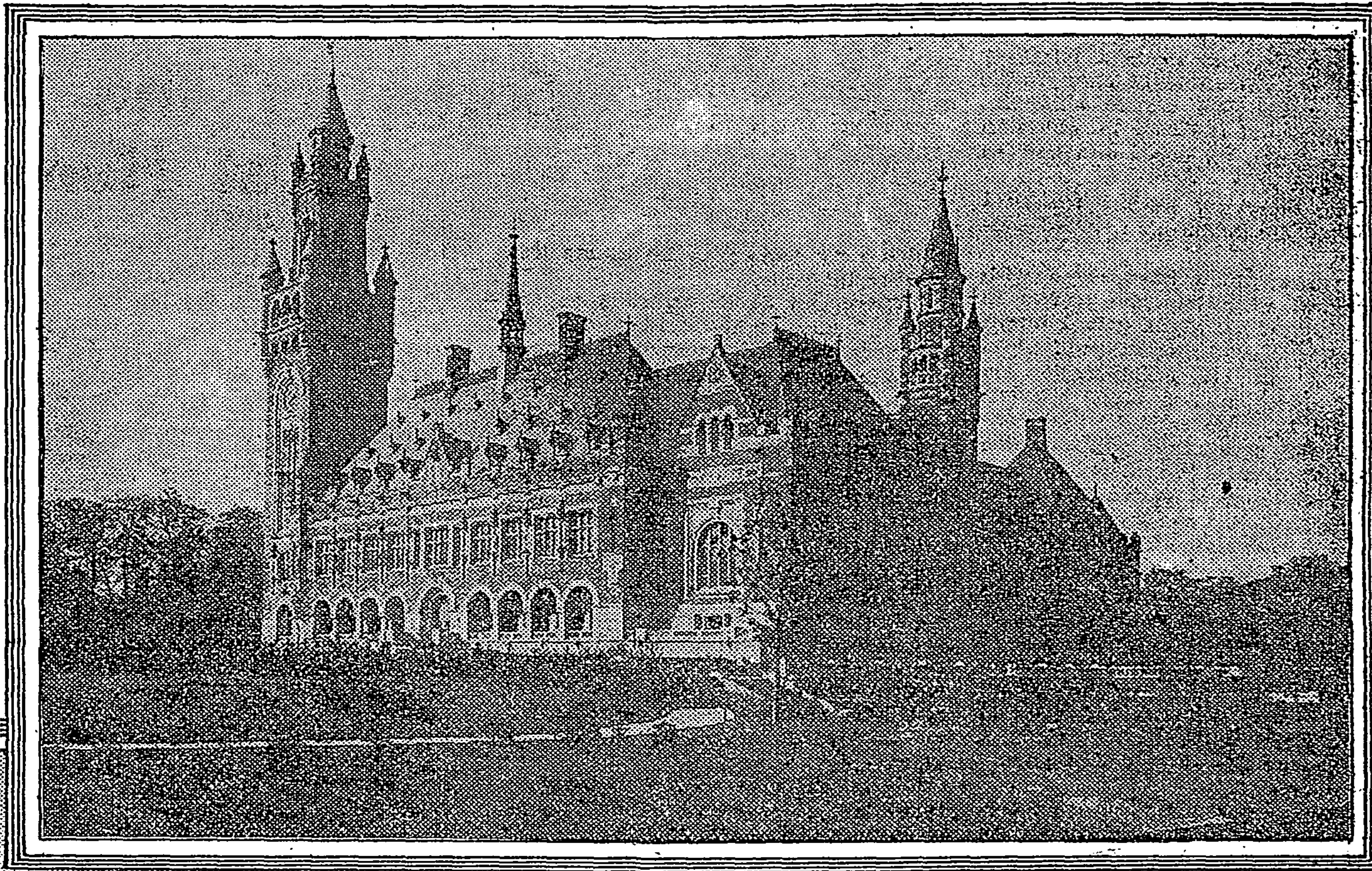
The Peace Palace is of generous dimensions, both as to ground plan and as to height. Unfortunately the latter, to the casual view, belittles the former. One asks why, in such a sit-

equeness to the entire structure than it now possesses. The only reason set forth by the matter-of-fact Dutch for abolishing one of the towers was that the purpose of a main tower was to inclose a clock whose dial should be conspicuous at a long distance, and that there was no need of two such clocks!

M. Cordonnier intended that one of the great towers should stand forth a good deal beyond the line of the facade, the flat sameness of which would thus have been relieved. He contested also the placing of much purely Dutch ornamentation, both on the exterior and in the interior of the palace; but the stolid self-sufficiency and utilitarian prejudice of the Dutchmen held firm.

Some expense was spared, no doubt, by the changes made in his plans, but it is probable that it will be fully balanced by the elaborate landscape architecture which has been undertaken on a seemingly needless scale. There are sunken gardens, terraces, a large basin, fountains, pagodas, and bowers. The double wrought-iron gates at the main entrance to the pal-

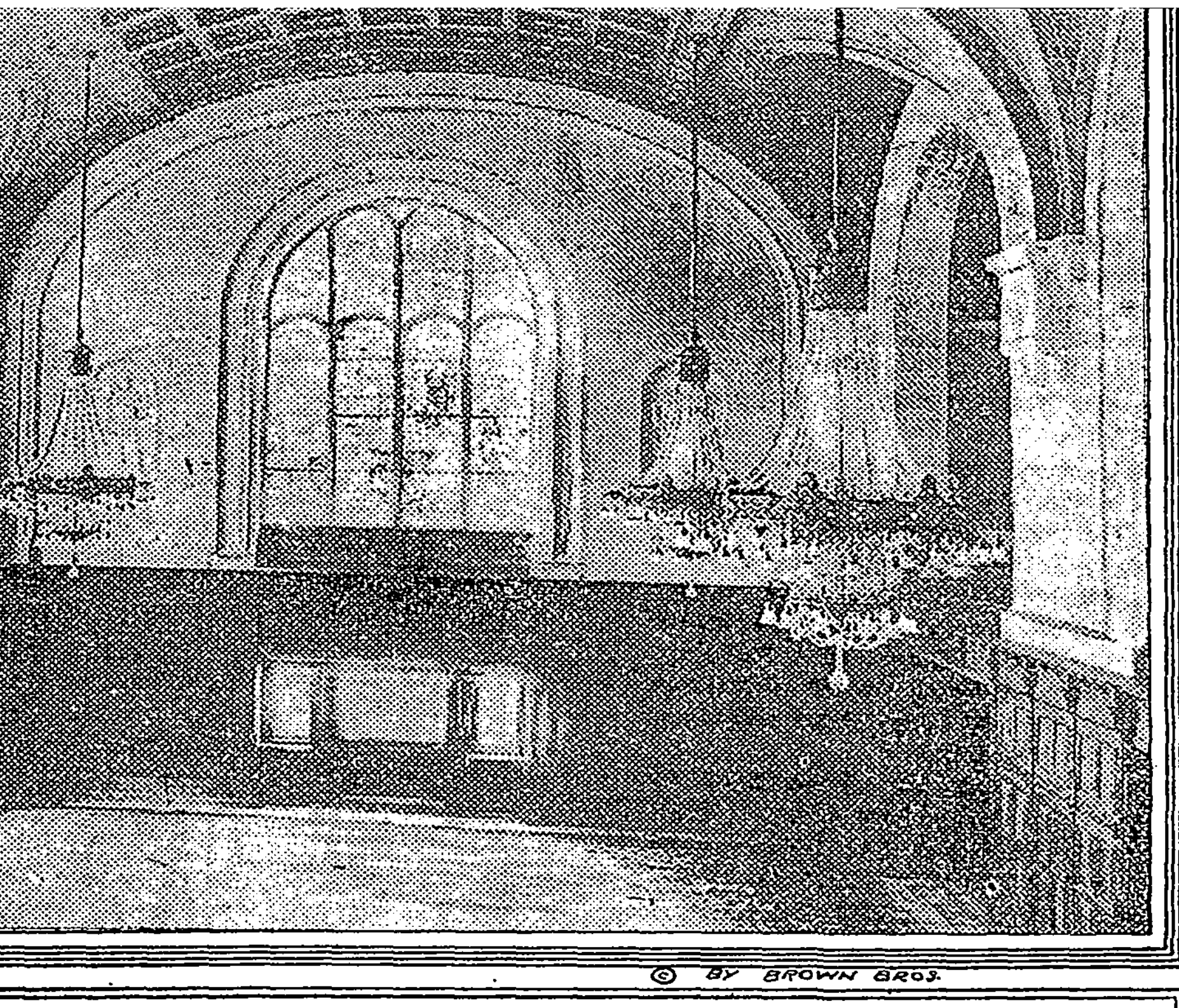
Its proportions could not well have been greater, in view of the character of the lower part of the facade; yet, in view of the general dimensions of the whole, it strikes one as inadequate. A very satisfying feature, of what may be conveniently called the south-eastern pavilion, the gable of which has been mentioned, is the series of very high and very broad windows which the architect has developed with a pleasing simplicity and reserve, yet not without a modest degree of ornament. These windows light the great hall of the palace of the height of two stories, wherein will sit the High Court of Arbitration, the final tribunal of international justice. What will be known as the Lesser Judgment Hall



The Peace Palace at The Hague.

orateness. The beauty of these gifts is simply amazing. The Japanese vases are cloisonnés and are worth at least \$60,000 each. The Chinese vases are very elegant in form, and the colors are of rare and exquisite quality. The designs are intricate and exceedingly ornate. The mural mosaics are delightful in conception and in color, and in this respect are equal to any work of the kind which Italy has produced.

Two of the foremost artists of France, Albert Besnard and Luc-Olivier Merson, are engaged upon vast pictorial compositions for the principal judgment halls. Both are members of the Institute of France, and M. Besnard has recently accepted, in succession to Carolus Duran, the directorship of the Villa Medici school of art at Rome. M. Besnard is painting on a canvas 23 feet in height and 15 feet in breadth the allegory of the People and Peace ruling the debates



One of the Reception Rooms.

ter passing the broad Roman portal the visitor enters a grandiose vestibule, simple and majestic, in the purest Romanesque-Renaissance style. The sweep of the generous arches is very fine, and the short Ionic columns and massive pilasters, in veined marble of contrasting tints, are their perfectly fitting complement. The almost dazzling polish of the marbles and of the tessellated pavement is somewhat relieved by the rich hues of the elaborately wrought doors, some in wood and some in bronze, opening thence into vast ante-chambers and corridors. The ante-chambers partake of the same character as the grand vestibule, with somewhat greater elaboration of ornament and with abundance of wooden paneling.

Confronting the visitor in the inner vestibule, under a lofty domelike ceiling which creates the impression of an ecclesiastical interior, will be a large marble statue of Peace, upon a lofty pedestal. The sum of \$20,000 has been assigned for its cost. The sculptor who is to execute the work has not yet been chosen; but it is known that Paul Wayland Bartlett is among those under consideration.

The grand stairway rises to right and to left on both sides of the space reserved for the statue, behind and above which is an immense stained-glass window.

From the inner vestibule the central court may be entered at either side of the grand stairway. Around it on three sides and on each floor there is a high and broad gallery. The daylight with which this is flooded enters the numerous rooms that open upon it, and which also, on their further side, look out upon the palace gardens.

The library is to be one of the most important equipments of the Peace Palace. Enriched as it will be with the contributions of all civilized peoples and governments, it should in time contain the most comprehensive collection of books and documents on international law and kindred subjects in the whole world.

The galleries of the central court link this very intimately with the other departments of the building. There is the general reading room at the northwestern angle of the palace, and next to it the "map room," while near by are several council chambers and consultation rooms. There are several rooms designated as "studies," to be assigned, of course, to the advocates of contending governments or parties.

All these rooms are within easy reach of the library and the office of the

undersecretaries. Of the forty and more rooms on each floor a considerable number are also set apart for the administrative officers and servants of the high court.

On the second floor (which in European parlance is termed the first story) are two assembly rooms, one in the middle front of the building, just over the grand entrance, for the administrative council of the permanent Court of Arbitration; the other, behind the great tower, for the general use of committees or for subordinate hearings in cases admitting of reference. The office of the Chief Secretary of the international court is also in the front of the building, separated from the council hall by an ante-room only. In a corresponding position adjoining the council room on the opposite side is the private room of the President of the permanent court. Further eastward the Great Judgment Hall occupies the full height of both the ground floor and the second floor.

All the rooms, vestibules, and corridors are paneled in rare woods, both as to the walls and the ceilings. In the more important of them the panels will contain symbolical and historical paintings, mosaics, or tapestries, and the windows will be in figured glass. The nations which have sanctioned the creation of the supreme international tribunal will each provide some costly work of art to embellish the palace.

In this respect the Dutch have shown marked liberality, whether or not it is wholly well advised. The priceless picture by Ferdinand Bol, the "Allegory of Peace," which had been for 200 years and more in the Town Hall of Leyden, now occupies a conspicuous place in the Great Judgment Hall. Ferdinand Bol flourished in the seventeenth century, was a native of Dordrecht and a pupil of Rembrandt, and died in Amsterdam.

Dutch Taste in Piles.

Many friezes and minor panels have been decorated with pictured tiles by Dutch artists, and with all the typical heaviness of Dutch taste in color and design. While the Hollanders are lavish of these artistic creations, it is the opinion of several cosmopolitan critics who have entered the palace that their generosity might have assumed a more desirable form. The Dutch tiles do not often harmonize with the refined grace which the French architect sought to give to the interior, and it would at all events have been wiser if they had been placed further apart from mural decorations of a much nobler and wholly distinct character. The greater part of the frescoes, too, are overwhelmingly Dutch. The pride of Holland in her colonies is manifested in a multitude of Javanese motives in bas-reliefs, both outside the palace and within it.

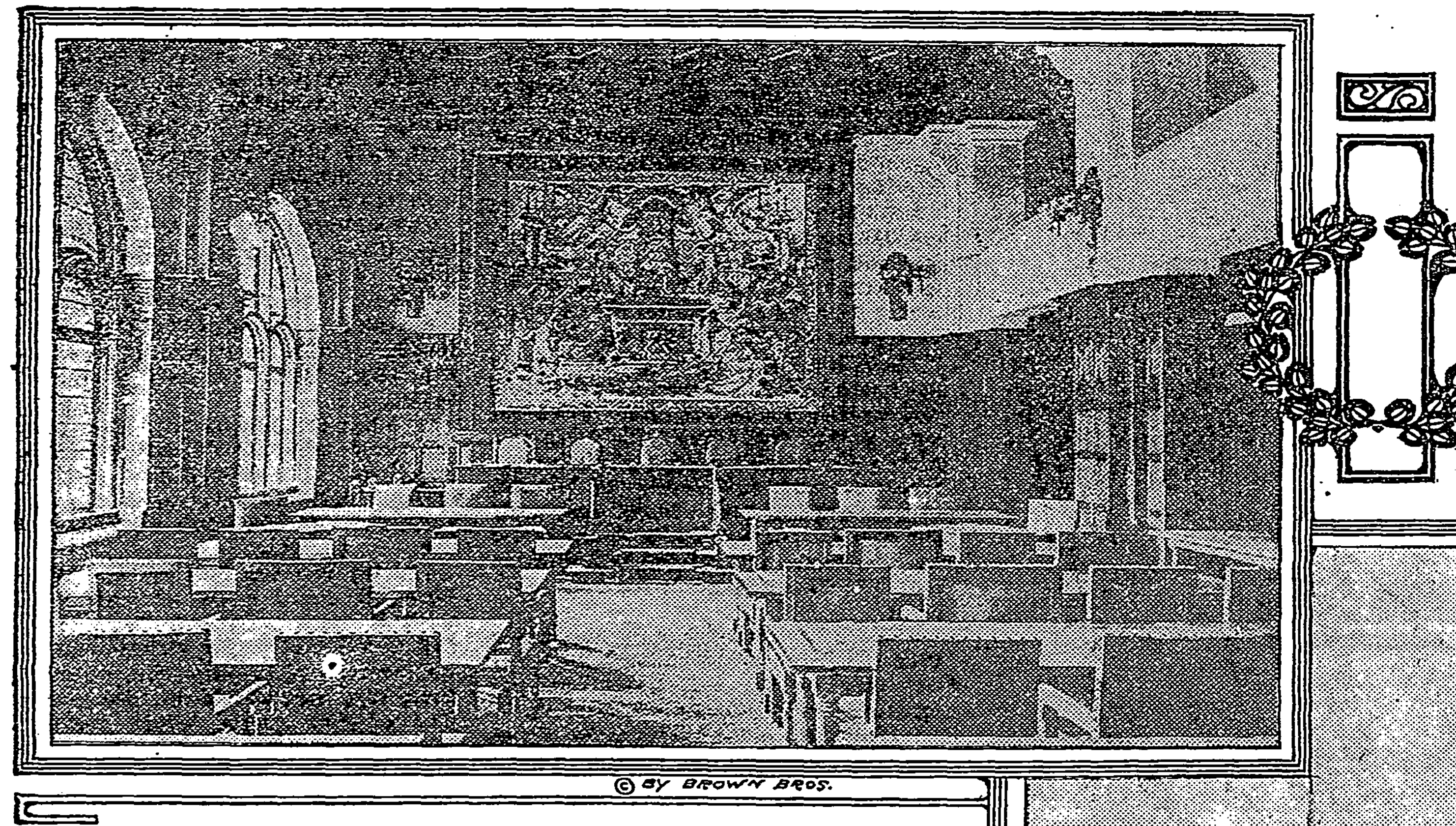
It is most fortunate that in the nature of things other nations had the implied right to use their discretion in the choice of the embellishments which they were to provide for the Peace Palace. England is to furnish stained-glass windows by her most illustrious artist in that field. Japan and China have already sent to The Hague the most magnificent vases, probably, that have ever come out of the East, and with them pedestals made of sacred wood and carved with marvelous skill and elab-

The Peace Ideal Pictured.

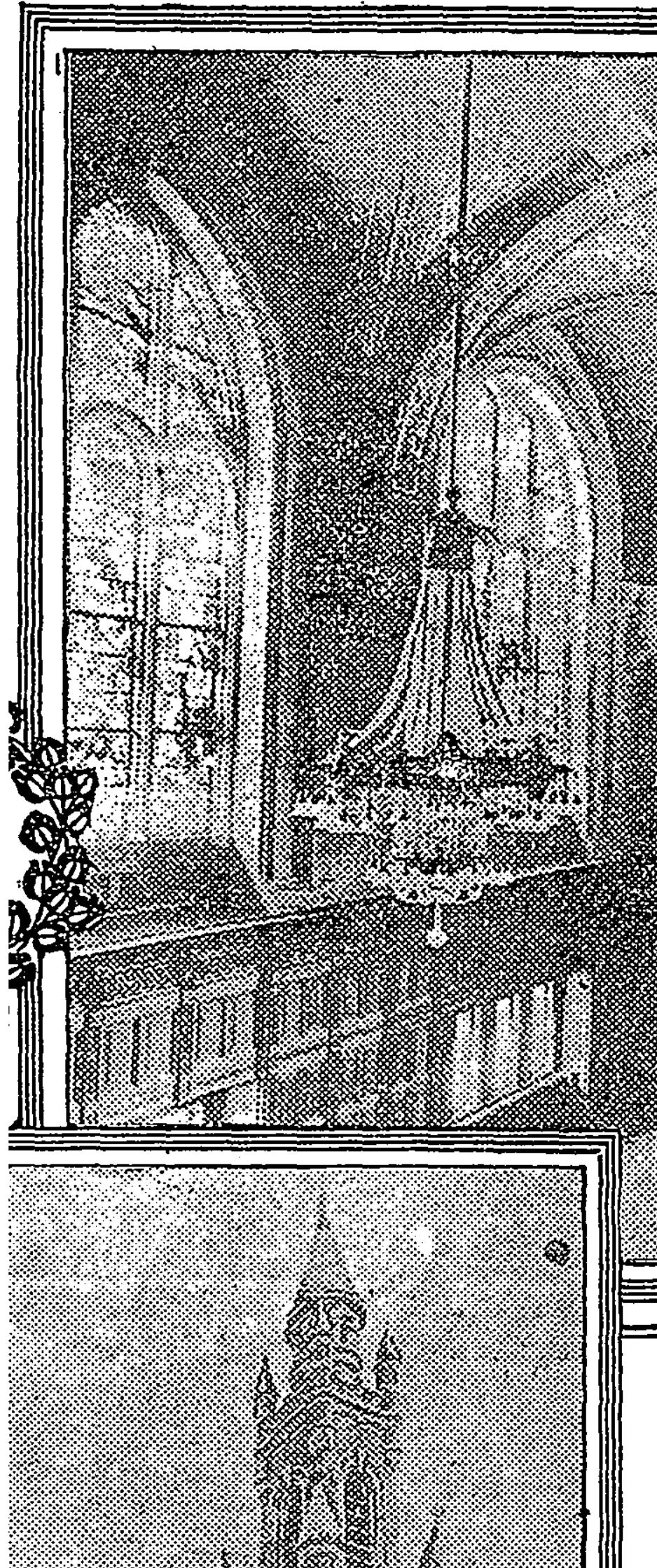
The number of figures is remarkably small for so large a canvas; but the artist has sought, by refraining from crowding it, to gain greater force. In the modeling all the figures are extremely lifelike, with a strength of projection that is almost startling. In the color scheme the exaggerated "high light" effects for which Besnard has long been especially noted are wholly absent. Instead he has attained the simpler expression of reality in a graver gamut of hues, very far removed, however, from sombreness.

The other decorative piece will be a square of goblin tapestry, quite as large as the mural painting of Besnard. Luc-Olivier Merson, the recognized master in designs for tapestry, is now in his seventy-sixth year, and this is likely to be the last great work that he will ever accomplish. The cartoon pattern yet lacks a great deal of being finished, and the artist is so afflicted with rheumatism that he is able to devote himself to it at intervals only. The making of the tapestry itself will consume about five years. A replica of the cartoon pattern, done in gray and black, will meanwhile be suspended in the Peace Palace. Both of these I have seen.

M. Merson's conception is intricate but supremely graceful and harmonious. It is again the allegory of Peace, but Peace in the triumphal bestowal of her benefits. The canvas is peopled with symbolical forms, as well as with typical figures from real life. In all is that marvelous savviness of outline for which the venerable artist is justly famed. Peace, superb in her lovely womanliness, sits enthroned on high. Around and below her are Justice, Concord, Strength, Love, Labor, Science, the Arts, the Intellect, and groups of men and women illustrative of the moral and physical activities of the world. A warrior in armor lies submissive at the feet of the chief allegorical personage. Angels, a-wing in the bright heavens, are blowing through golden trumpets the glad tidings of peace and good will to every point of the universe. The fruits of industry and of right-doing abound in the foreground. All the costumes of the figures of mortals are mediaeval, because, as M. Merson explained to me, the modern dress does not lend itself either to picturesqueness of design or to vividness of color. The front of



Where Some of the Peace Parties Will Be Held.



people as ever they were, and all their attempts at idealism have been heavy and have fallen short of their aim. It is rare that one finds in the cities of Holland, so admirable in many respects, any really graceful examples of the higher types of architecture.

A Dutch Departure.

In this instance the Dutchmen who determined the manner in which the plans for the Peace Palace should be finally carried out sought at the beginning a departure from the traditional heaviness of the national art. It is a great pity that they did not pursue this principle consistently to the end. Architects of all countries were invited to compete. The expert jury appointed by the executive board of the Carnegie Peace Palace Foundation awarded the palm to Louis Marie Cordonnier, member of the Institute of France, already noted for his achievements in church-building in the Romanesque style. Most ungraciously, however, after he had been declared the winner of the competition, and without the sanction of the expert jury (of which, by the way, Prof. W. R. Ware of Columbia University was a member), the executive board saddled M. Cordonnier with a Dutch colleague, Mynheer van der Steur, as a peremptory condition of the realization of his general plan.

Mynheer van der Steur is a very competent architectural engineer, the designer of the fine Bourse at Amsterdam and of other monumental structures; but evidently, to judge by the outcome of this action, he was incapable of fully sympathizing with M. Cordonnier's conception of what the Peace Palace should be. Mynheer van der Steur has held an advisory position as to the broad lines of the edifice, wherever there was question of their modification, and a supervisory one as to all the details of construction. The executive board needed van der Steur to give countenance to its own peculiar notions where they were in conflict with the ideas of the architect chosen by the expert jury. And these ideas, as might have been expected, have proved detrimental to a general scheme which already was by far too conventional.

A half hour's walk or a ten minutes' drive from the centre of this beautiful Dutch capital brings one to the pleasant site of the palace.

On one of the four sides lie the extensive royal woods known as the Zorgvliet, and on another the even larger Scheveningsche Bosch. It is at the very beginning of the old main highway to Scheveningen, the finest seaside resort in Holland, and only about three miles distant. Electric tramcars pass frequently, their bells clanging beneath the noble arches of verdure almost as fiercely as they do along Central Park West.

On the other two sides of the palace site are new and highly respectable outlying quarters of The Hague, in which the villa type of residence still predominates.

The immediate approaches to the Peace Palace will in the end be decidedly charming. The little park surrounding it, part of which was given

uation, with a semi-sylvan environment and with such abundant space, so much height was deemed necessary. It could be excused in a modern French chateau, which, though often erroneously, is supposed to be reminiscent of feudal attack and defense. Here, also, there are towers and tourelles, even meurtrières (loopholes!) To the imagination that is enamored of some vague vision of what a twentieth century temple of peace might be, this realization of the much-talked-of project seems almost incredible.

The material is light red brick and yellowish gray stone. The architectural type is Sicilian Romanesque, reflecting in some degree both the Norman and the Oriental influence resultant from the many political mutations of the island of the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages. But at the same time it is closely allied in general aspect to the type of certain much-visited Flemish town halls. If more elegant in detail, it lacks, however, the strength and the intensity of idea which some of these latter reveal. The greater and the lesser tones are superbly mediaeval, rich in outline and extremely graceful, yet inappropriately suggestive of warlike uses.

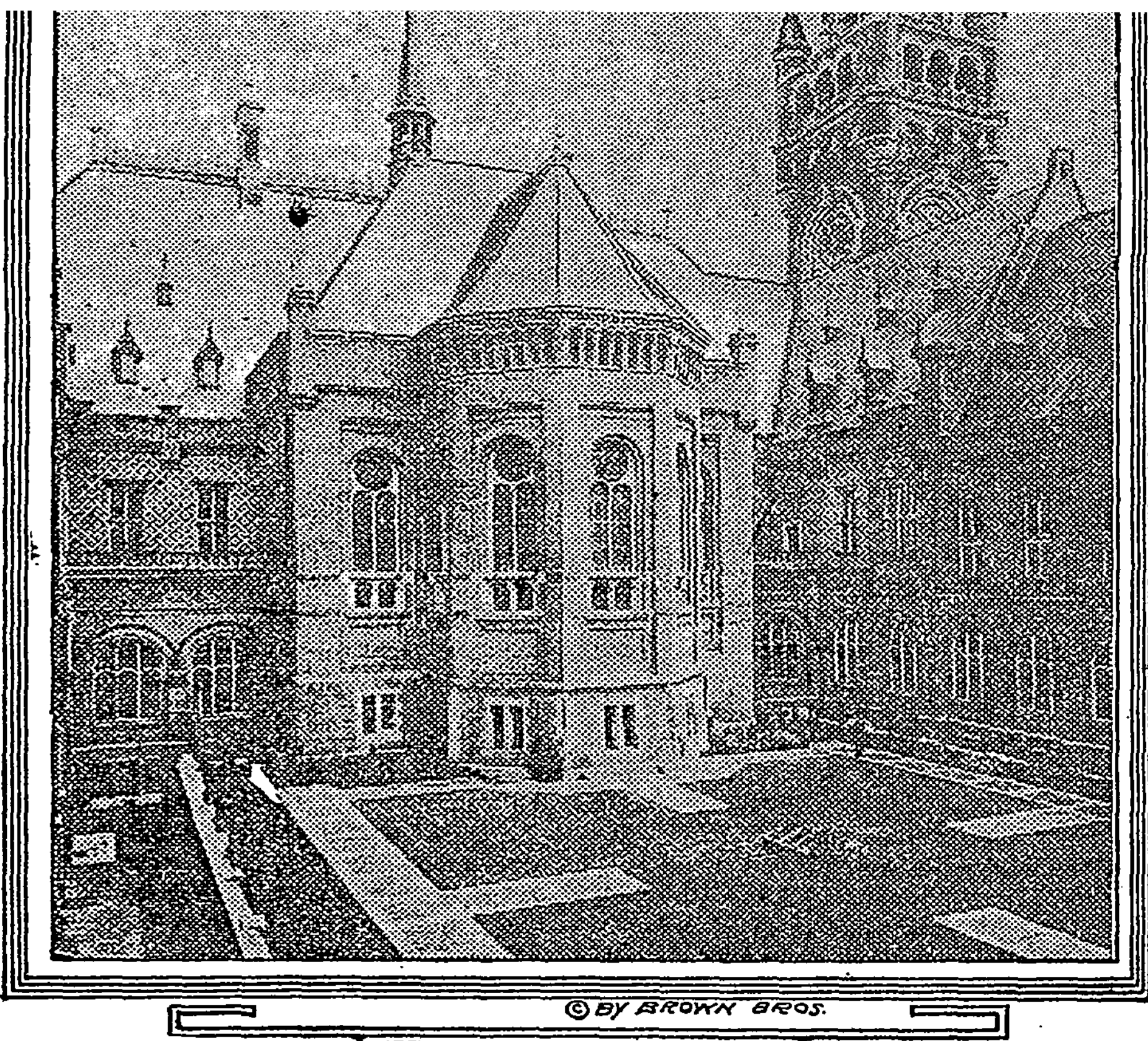
The Towers.

This impression of the upper portion, to be sure, is happily relieved by the lovely Greek colonnades or galleries which unite the bartizans or round projecting turrets and by the smaller turrets themselves that surmount the bases of the chief pinnacles. The great tower could stand by itself as a most finished example of reminiscent art. It might, indeed, have been a fitting adjunct to a main structure quite different in form from the present one.

This main structure reminds one most forcibly of the hotel de ville at Ypres, although far inferior to it in mass and in rugged sincerity. There is, however, a partly redeeming feature. The view of the long facade, with its rectangular windows, and of the steep roof, pierced by its twenty-five lucarnes, in monotonous rows, one above another, is broken towards the eastern end by a fine tourelle and by the handsome gable of a pavilion-like continuation, above and in the rear of which, in the midst of the lateral wing, looms the second tower. This is much like the first, but less lofty and with a much slenderer pinnacle. It has besides, between the turrets, heavy and fantastic bas-reliefs, representing the lions of the Netherland arms.

Both of the towers in their general form are imitations of the famous "beffroirs" of Flanders, refined imitations, it is true, and in certain respects more admirable than the originals, although less naive and with much less of potential suggestiveness. The other two outer walls of the palace do not present any specially accentuated features. It is true that they are more or less screened by the thick foliage of the grove and of the Zorgvliet.

In M. Cordonnier's original design there were two great towers, instead of one. Their relative positions would have given far more pictur-



View of the Inner Court.

ace park bear medallion figures of Peace, Justice, Concord, and Amity.

In its general ground dimensions the Peace Palace is a quadrilateral, the length and breadth of which are the same, namely, 234 feet. There is a central court 132 feet long by 102 feet wide, in the middle of which is to be placed a large fountain. The broad windows opening out of the ground floor upon the court are marked by pilasters, which at a little distance produce the visual effect of a cloister. Above them there is hardly any ornament except a frieze in terra cotta. There is much picturesqueness in the angles of the walls and in the projecting masses. Eventually a great part of the court is to be laid out in flower beds.

If we return now to the main facade of the palace we are somewhat oppressed by the monotonous arcade of the ground floor, very distinctly imitative of a Dutch or Flemish town hall, the lower part of which is almost invariably a market. The middle arch, larger and more decorative than the others, indicates the grand entrance.

is in the opposite or western end of the main structure, immediately behind the great tower, and is of the height of the ground floor only.

The Main Facade.

The main facade gains somewhat on nearer approach, much ornamentation being revealed which might not be suspected at a distance. There is a great deal of sculpture in shallow relief, with rustic and arabesque designs. The most striking of all the adornments of the facade, however, is a series of statues of symbolical personages, such as Justice, Knowledge, Abundance, &c., supported by richly carved corbels and with a crownlike baldachin over each. These are distributed between the windows of the second floor. Another and larger figure of Justice stands in a niche in the superimposed pediment which breaks the monotony of the roof just above the grand entrance.

The interior of the Peace Palace is much more impressive than the exterior, despite some further tampering with the architect's design. Af-