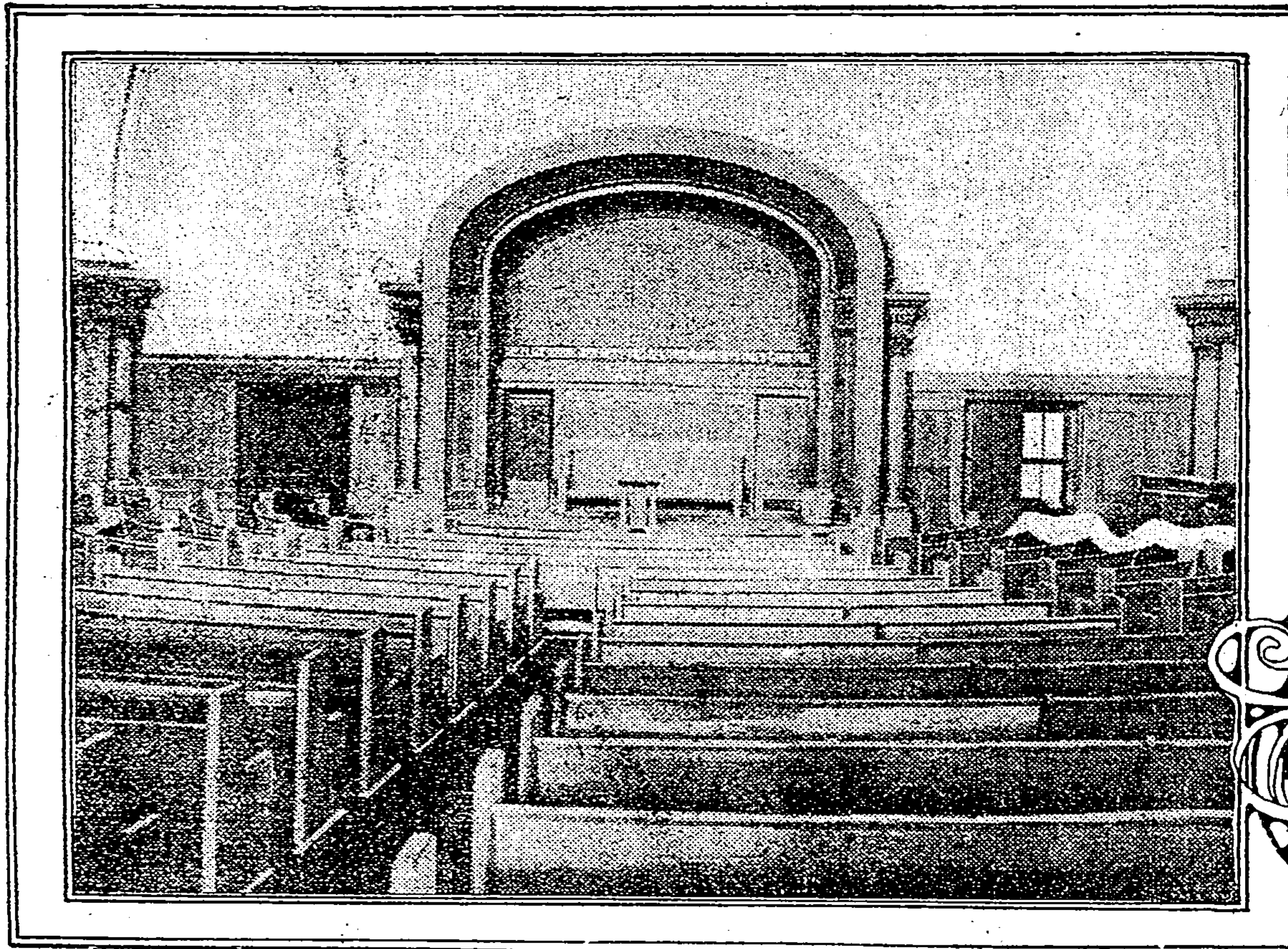


NEW MEETING HOUSE FOR SOCIETY OF ETHICAL CULTURE

Unusual and Interesting Features About the Edifice That Will Be Dedicated Next Sunday.

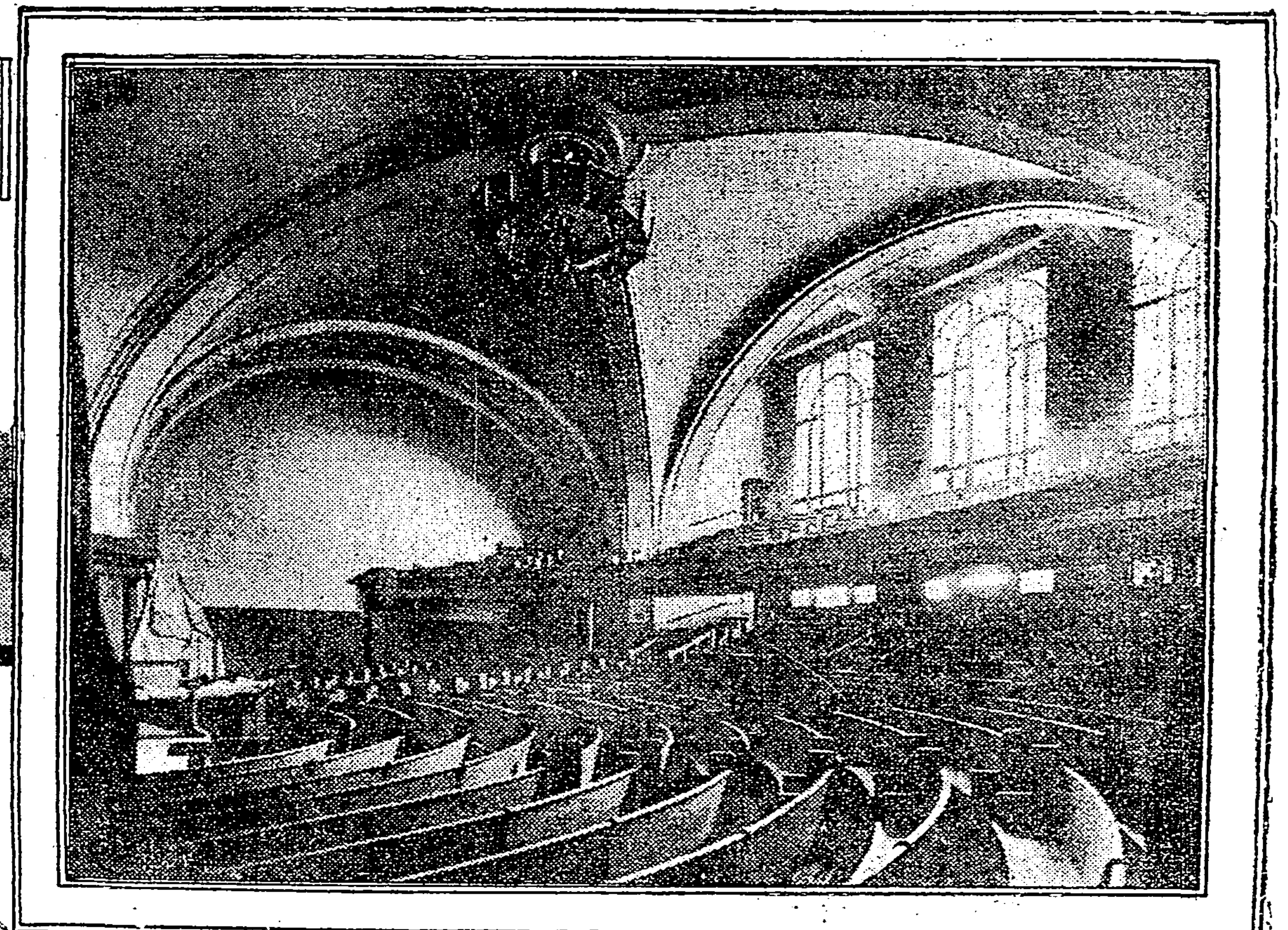
Simplicity the Keynote--The Seats are Arranged Radially Around Slightly Elevated Platform.



Interior View



The Doorway



The Seats Arranged Radially and the Gallery.

THE new Meeting House of the Society for Ethical Culture, Central Park West and Sixty-fourth Street, will be dedicated next week with appropriate ceremonies. The exercises will begin October 23 and will be continued on the two days following.

The first impression one gets of the building is one of simplicity. The exterior, of white Bedford stone, is quite different in style from any other religious edifice in the city. The vertical lines of the general scheme are in keeping with the demands of American city architecture, where little perspective is offered for horizontal expansion. The simplicity of the exterior, with its simple wall, is crowned by a decorative cornice which connects the composition of the new building with that of the Ethical Culture School immediately adjoining it. Immediately below the cornice are eight niches, ready to receive appropriate sculpture referring to or picturing the religious leaders of the past who have been the inspirers of the Ethical movement.

Nothing perhaps strikes the casual passerby more forcibly than the plain, unadorned wall which faces Central Park West. The more inquiring can discover the character and purposes of the building by reading the two descriptive tablets, but to the rushing New Yorker of the avenues the architect seems to have turned his back in disdain.

Doubtless architectural considerations in the interior scheme have been partly responsible for this bold move; but the severe plain wall is eloquent in its protest against the breathless rush and hustle of the modern city, against the gaudy vestibule and over-ornate portals of gilded architecture. It beckons to the hastening, sordid throng: "Tarry a while; there is in life more than stocks and shekels and vain show."

Surmounting the main entrance on Sixty-fourth Street is a bas relief, by Estelle Rumbold Kohn, of a group of eight in an attitude of reverent vigil.

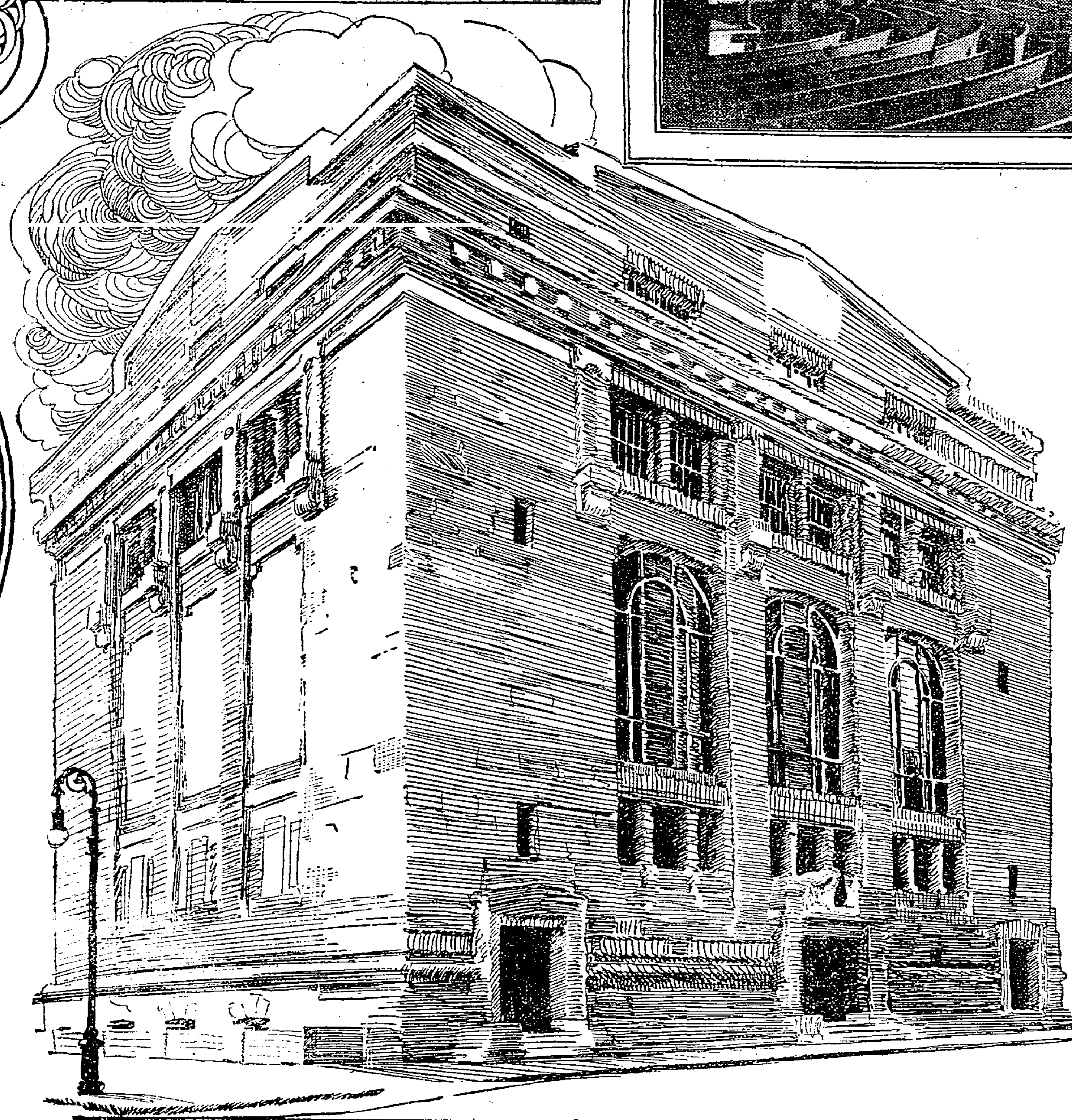
Four smaller figures, of torch bearers, decorating the two side entrances, are the work of Harriet F. Clark.

The interior scheme of the building is novel. In contrast to the sharp division between auditorium and sacral space characterizing the conventional church edifice the new Meeting House is one unitary whole. There is no nave, and the seats are arranged radially around a platform of an insignificant elevation, approached by steps that run all around it, as if to emphasize the idea that the leader rises from the midst of the audience.

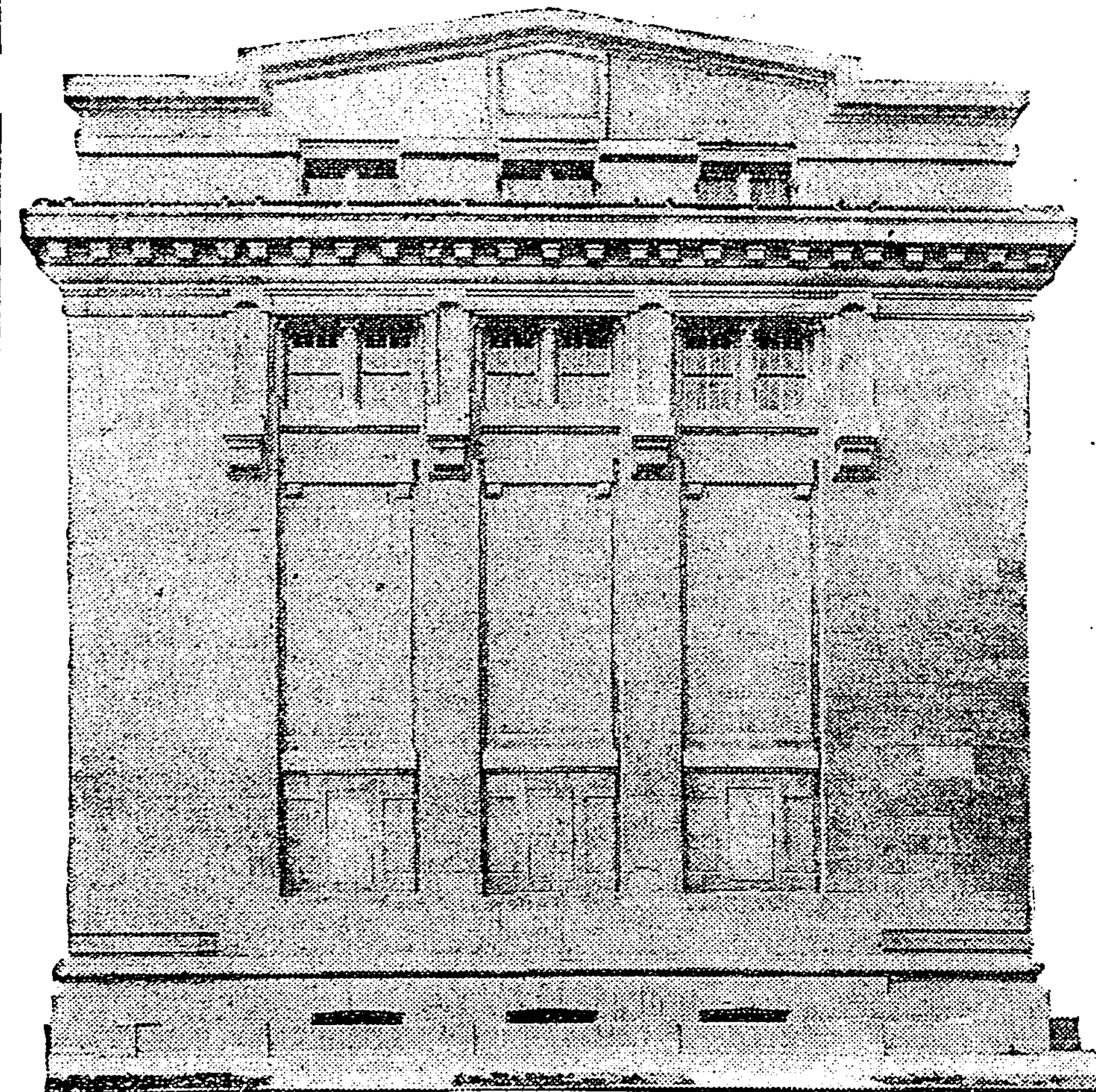
This round table scheme brings the individuals in the congregation closer to each other, and the speaker seems the intimate interpreter of the highest



Dr. Felix Adler, Leader of the Society.



The New Meeting House of the Society of Ethical Culture.



The Wall that Faces Central Park West.

the Ethical point of view, which Professor Felix Adler and his associates have advocated for the last thirty-five years, will occupy its platform from Sunday to Sunday.

The two stories above the auditorium are arranged to be the centre of the society's Sunday school and the headquarters of the Ethical propaganda.

In the public mind ethical culture in this country has always been identified with Prof. Adler. His own ideas on the subject were forcibly expressed in the course of a statement he made to THE NEW YORK TIMES not long ago on the subject of the training of children:

"Moral training is necessary for every one; religious training is another matter. Not every one is born with a religious nature; there can be unreligious persons just as there are unmusical persons.

"It is a gift, given to many and omitted almost entirely in the case of others.

"Very great harm is done by trying to force religion on people who are not by nature religious. They are not attuned to it, they do not grasp the real significance of it, and they inevitably degrade it. Much of the tragedy of history has arisen from no other cause than insistence in forcing religion on persons irreligious by temperament, and their consequent misconception of it.

"Therefore, in my own training of children I assume with regard to religion the attitude of 'You may take it or leave it.' A child of religious temperament may be trained in religious thought, but others may need only moral training, and would be better for not having the religious side forced on them."

Dr. Adler recently received an international honor. He was appointed to the Roosevelt chair in the University of Berlin, which is a sort of unofficial Ambassadorship from the American people to the German people. Although a Jew, he was honored at the university at the very time that it was raising new barriers against the education of Jews. Diplomats, statesmen, and university professors united in giving him marks of their esteem and regard.

spiritual life of the group enveloping him.

This effect of unity is carried out in the entire interior plan of the building; it is a study in circular arches all contributing to the harmonic effect of the one central unity.

The simplicity of the interior is in keeping with the exterior of the building. The unfinished wood of the benches and the plainness of the walls pro-

duce no Puritanic effect. The new Meeting House is designed for service and for comfort; it is not a Vanity Fair, neither is it a prison of the spirit. The organ and the choir music will contribute not a little to the aesthetic attraction of the services.

When works of art have replaced the plain, colored glass, the north wall windows will enhance the quiet beauty of the auditorium. A memorial stained-

glass window, the cartoon for which is the work of Louis le Vaillant, suggests the artistic possibilities of the hall and invites imitation. Other memorial windows have been donated, but are not yet in place.

The new Meeting House is well named. For it is not a lecture hall nor a lyceum, nor yet a church in the ordinary sense. It is primarily a house of worship. Experts in the presentation of