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other hand, endeavours to take shapes given by nature and apply them directly to architecture. Sullivan's laws constitute a coherent body of unified principles that lead to the kind of architecture so well known as functional. For Gaudi, on the other hand, the specific complex appears to be less important: he is above all concerned with details; architecture, like painting and sculpture, is for him before anything else an art. Thus for Gaudi a pavilion can be the pretext for a study of a palace in miniature, a vestibule a study of the effect of oblique pillars, a roof a novel construction in stone. Everywhere we encounter the seeker's experimental spirit, each time in a special field. Two typical buildings indicate clearly the different intentions of Sullivan and Gaudi: The Carson, Pirie and Scott Department Store in Chicago (1899, 1903–04) by

Sullivan on the one hand and the Casa Mila in Barcelona (1905–10) by Gaudi on the other. Whereas the department store in question grew out of the problem of the department store as such and out of structural possibilities, the Casa Mila is a direct application of the natural principle of geological layers (see page 187). Moreover, Gaudi experimented but once in this direction, an indication of his experimental spirit. It will be noted, moreover, that the ridge of the roof of the Casa Mila, having a variable height, is not the expression of an overflowing imagination but is the consequence, which is perfectly logical, of a very artful construction method (see Fig. 29–34). In order to understand and properly assess Gaudi, it will thus be necessary to study his work with exactitude. Gaudi is not, as it were, an easily digestible dish!

3. The Significance of Gaudi for our Generation

Have we today anything to learn from Gaudi? His Neo-gothic applications and improvements have only a historical value, his bold structures are no longer of use in our age, his style is bizarre and strange. Thus there is no question of seeking to copy or imitate Gaudi. However, it is certain that from the historical point of view the lesson of this great architect is highly profitable.

Let us recapitulate briefly the principles that emerge from these considerations:

a) Modern architecture has reached a stage where it has a certain canon. The need to enrich its vocabulary is a pressing one. The achievement of Gaudi is a classical example of an architecture that is ceaselessly self-renewing. But it shows

us likewise all the dangers attendant upon such an architecture: arbitrariness and anarchy. From this point of view Gaudi can serve as an example by preventing a much too overflowing imagination from losing itself in total confusion.

b) The theory of Le Corbusier according to which good architecture ought to be above all exact (by making use of the right angle, the cube and the cylinder) deserves to be compared with the work of Gaudi, and such a comparison would be most fertile in ideas: in fact, another point of view from that of intellectual abstraction can also be fruitful: that of empirical naturalism.

c) Thirdly, the polychromic imagination of Gaudi, which is prodigious and truly inspired, should once again be emphasized; we can still profit by it today.

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