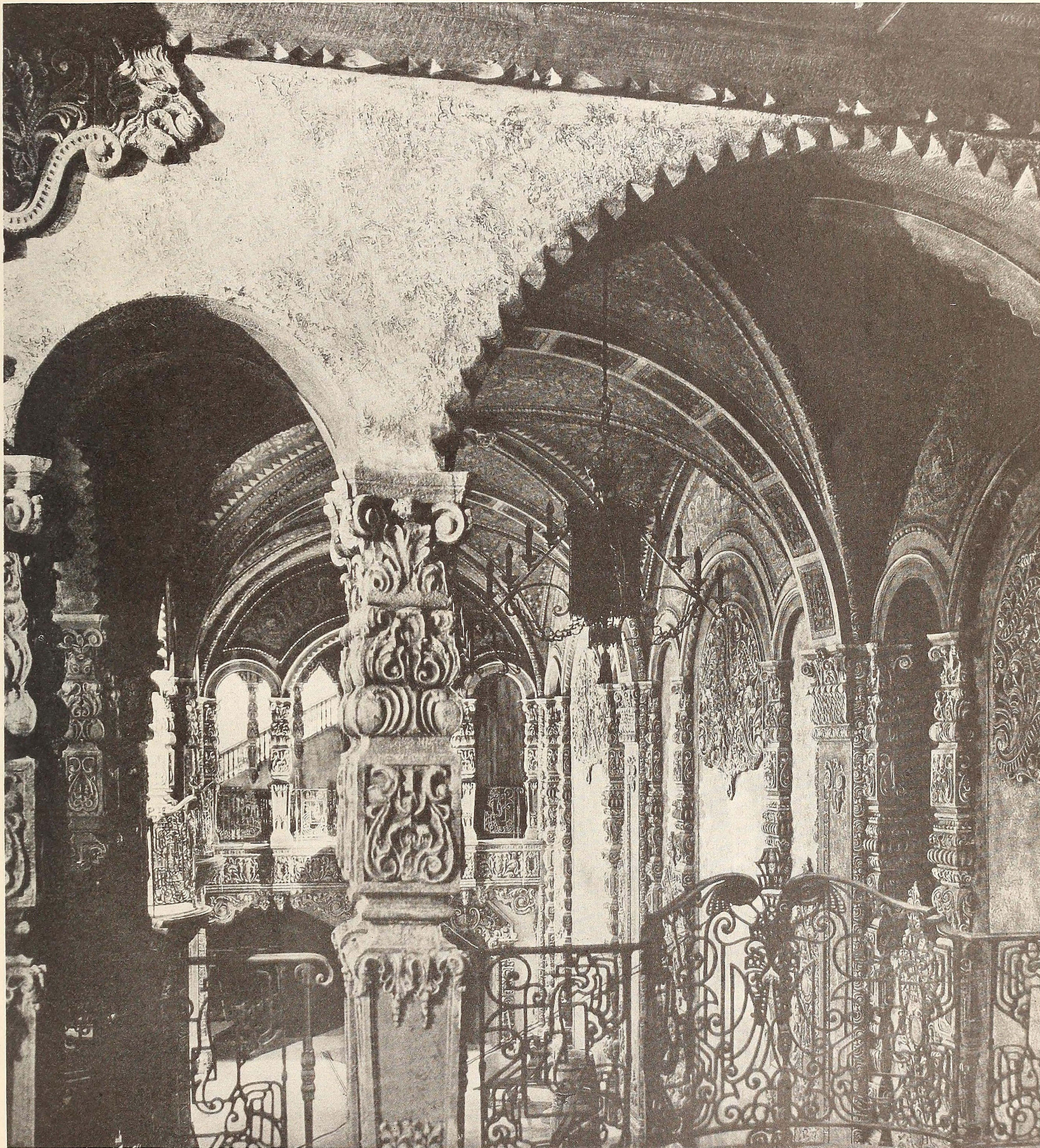


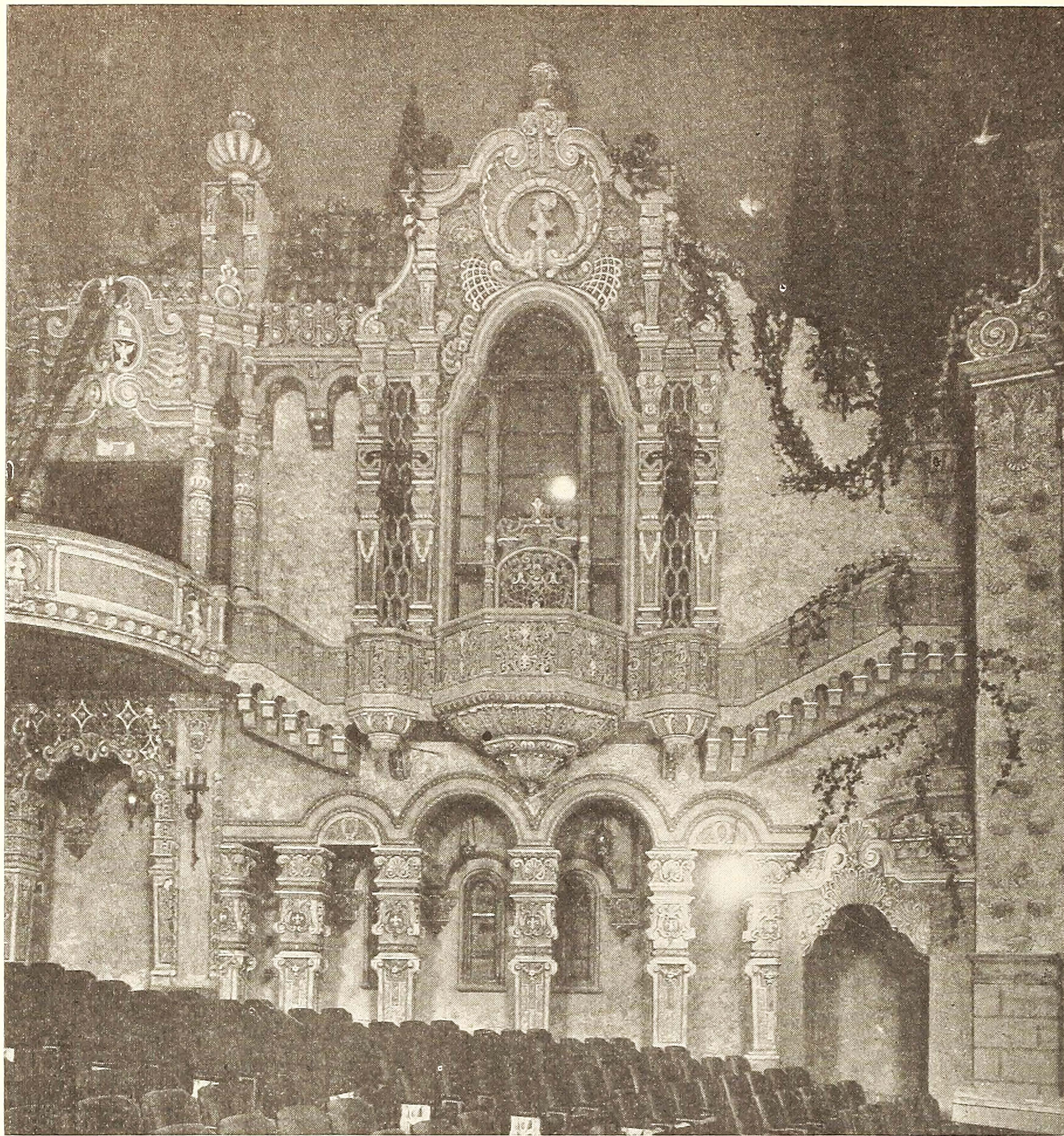
A BLEND OF SPANISH AND ITALIAN MOTIFS

Picturing Loew's new 4,000-seat Valencia theatre in Jamaica, N. Y., designed by John Eberson

[ALL VALENCIA PHOTOS BY BROWNING, N. Y.]

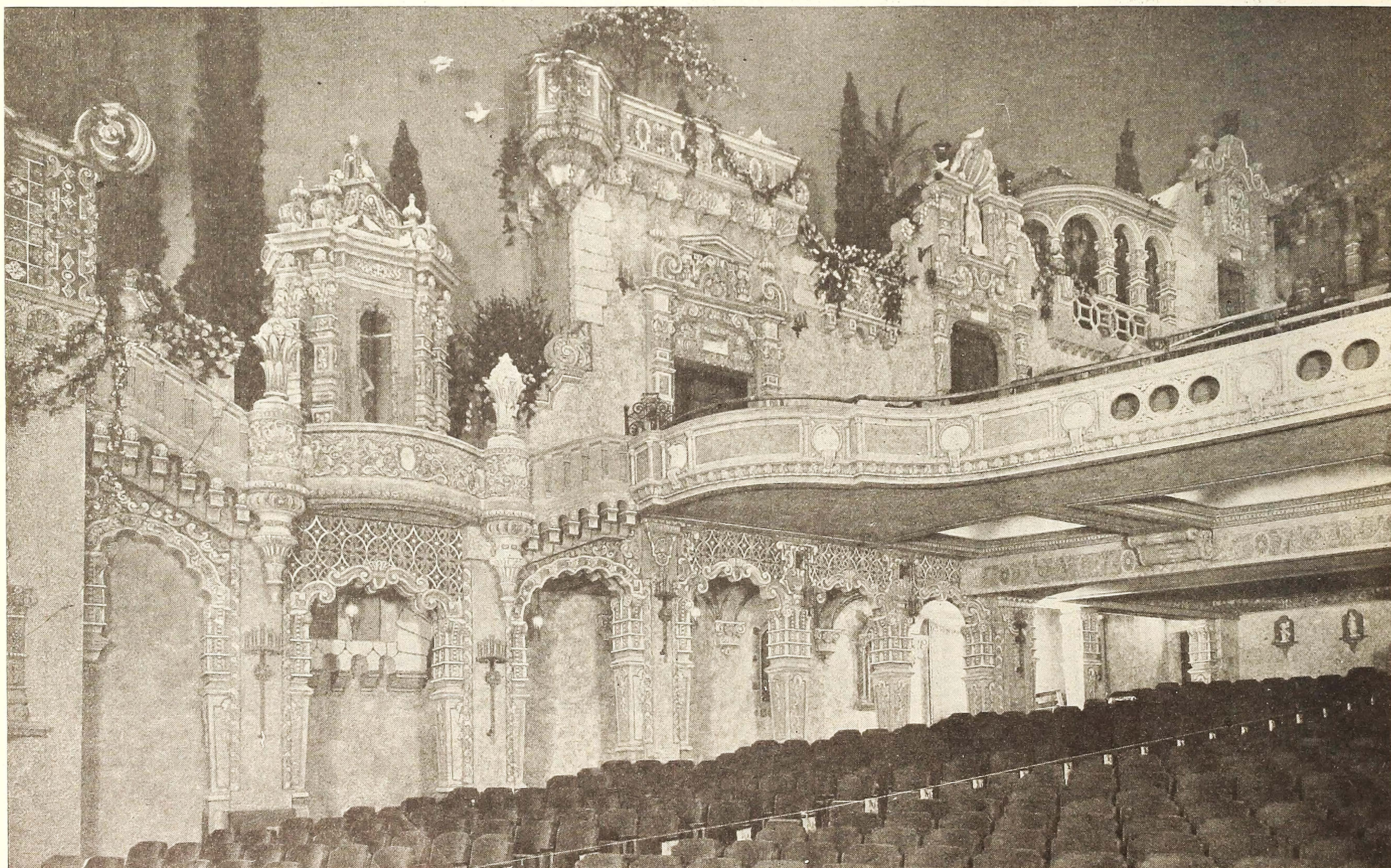


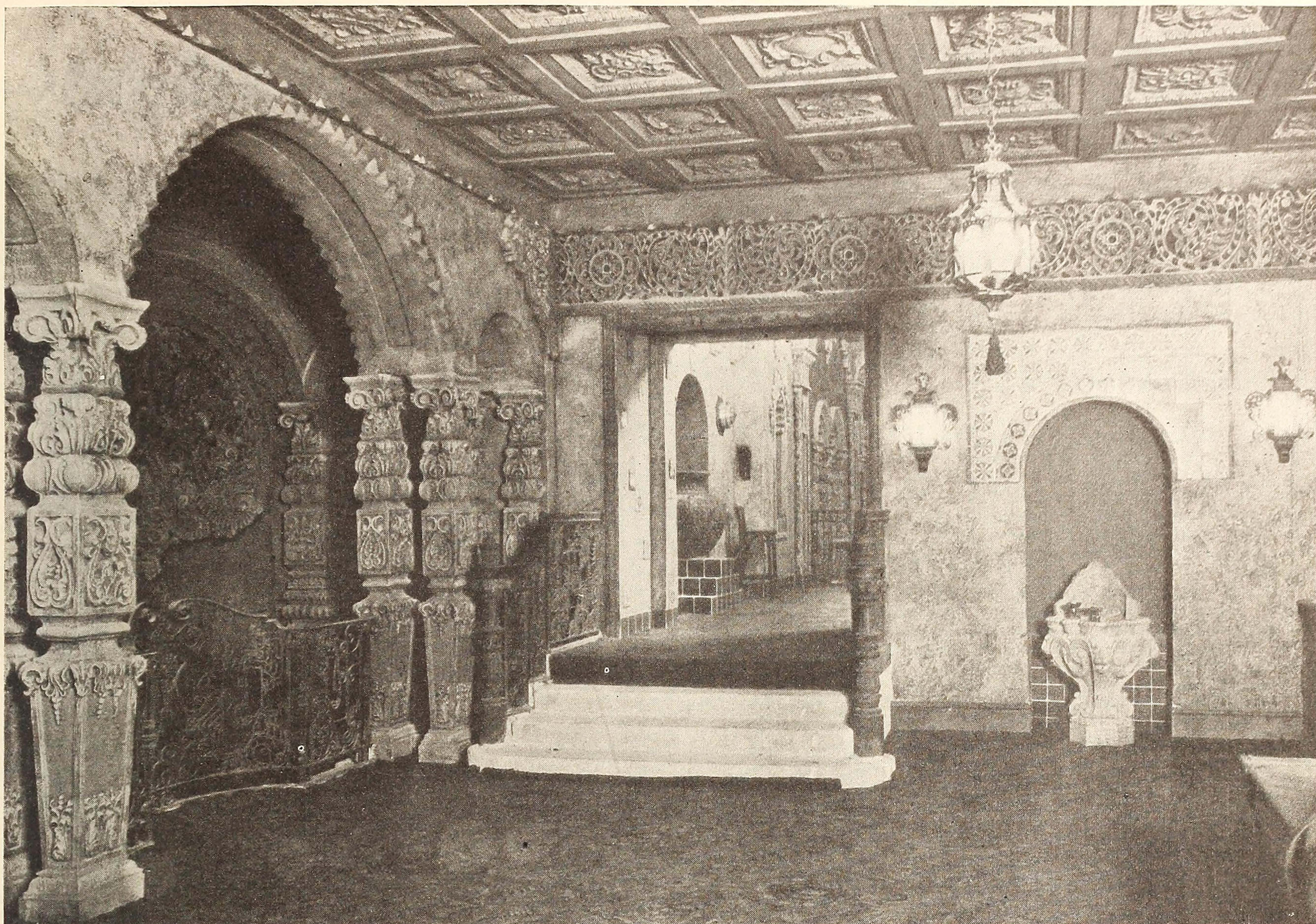
Looking from the mezzanine floor, through a wrought-iron balcony railing and a maze of arches, down into the main foyer. The design is basically Spanish, with Italian styles influencing the secondary decorative features, particularly in the lighting. Notable is the arched-border wall treatment.



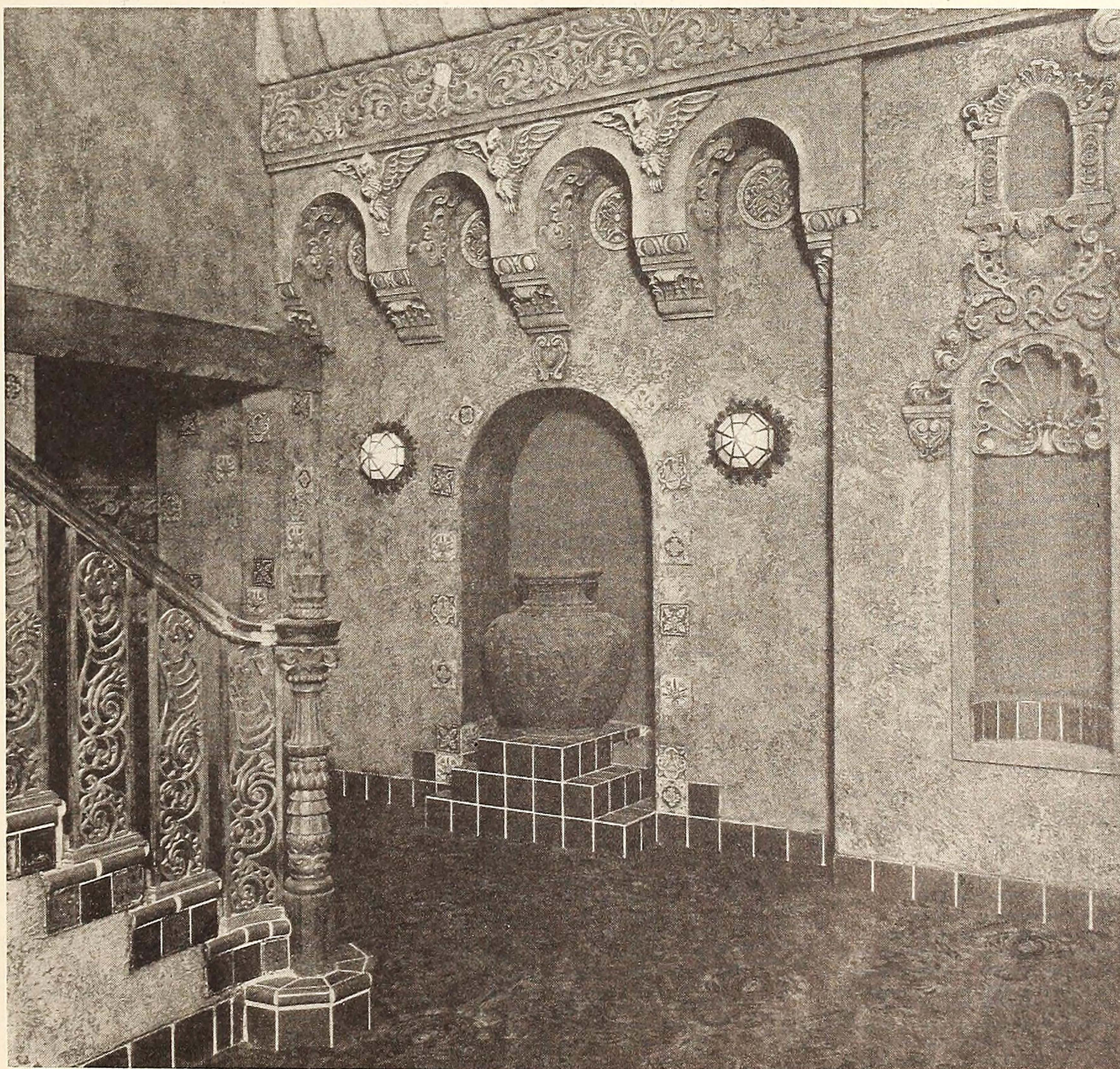
Right: The auditorium, looking toward the left wall, near the proscenium arch.

Below: The atmospheric design as executed for the right wall of the auditorium.





Above: Arched recesses and brilliant ceiling treatment in the foyer on the mezzanine floor.



Left: An inner foyer on the mezzanine floor showing use of tile for the wainscot.

Loew's New Valencia on Long Island

Combining a description of the latest addition to the Loew circuit in Greater New York with a discussion of exploitation as applied to theatre openings, making an article that goes beyond the structure to the spirit that makes it pay

THE late Marcus Loew once said, while in a jocular mood at an exhibitor convention, that he did not know how many theatres he owned or controlled. He awoke each morning, he said, to find that his staff had bought this or that chain, or that a new theatre had been opened in some strategic locality.

Frankness, tempered by a flair for humor, made the late theatre magnate beloved throughout the motion picture industry, and it is regrettable that he was not to alive to see the opening of his new Valencia theatre in Jamaica, on Long Island.

This new link in the world-wide chain of Loew theatres ranks as one of the most outstanding—an atmospheric house designed by John Eberson, Chicago and New York architect, and originator of this treatment in theatre interiors.

Spain, gay and colorful under a starlit sky, affords the architectural theme for the interior, although one finds in observing the scheme of design a certain Italian influence which dovetails splendidly into the Spanish motif which predominates.

In entering the grand lobby one is impressed by the heavy beam work of the ceiling, which tops walls lined with richly colored pilasters.

Leading off the lobby is the grand stairway to the mezzanine. A veined marble has been used in the treads of this stairway, while the risers are of faience tile in effective design.

Also rising from the lobby is a winding stair of marble leading to the mezzanine promenade, from the overhung balconies of which one obtains an enchanting view of the grand lobby, with its fountains and vegetation.

The auditorium, the general treatment of which is not unlike that of other Eberson houses, gives the illusion of sitting in the open under a clear blue sky dotted with sparkling stars. The effect is that of a Spanish patio garden in gay regalia for a moonlit festival. The atmospheric effect is further stressed by the judicious use of wrought iron, statuary, vines and plants.

Although the theatre seats about 4,000 persons, the effect of coziness is not lost, due partially to the atmospheric motif, perhaps, and to the soft coloring of the decorations.

The men's room, women's parlor, cosmetic room and check room, all handsomely decorated, are off the mezzanine promenade.

The theatre is built of heavily reinforced concrete supported on structural steel. It was erected at a cost of \$2,000,000.

Pictures and presentation will form the entertainment policy of the theatre, which is managed by William K. Saxton. The stage-band is under the direction of Walt Roesner, formerly at the New York Capitol; the symphony orchestra is being conducted by Don Albert, while at the console of the Robert Morton is John Gart.

On week days the admission prices will range from 25 to 60 cents; on Saturdays, 35 to 65 cents, and on Sundays and holidays, 50 to 65 cents.

The opening of the Valencia in January un-



A chandelier in the foyer, typical of the lighting fixture design.

der the supervision of Terry Turner, brings into the discussion one of the most interesting personalities connected with the film theatre, while Turner's methods in opening a new house are worthy of examination.

Terry Turner who is manager of advertising and publicity for Loew's, Inc., has opened 42 motion picture houses for Loew's throughout the country. Consequently, by mere virtue of experience, he should know something about the advertising and the various kinds of ballyhoo that make for a good opening. He does.

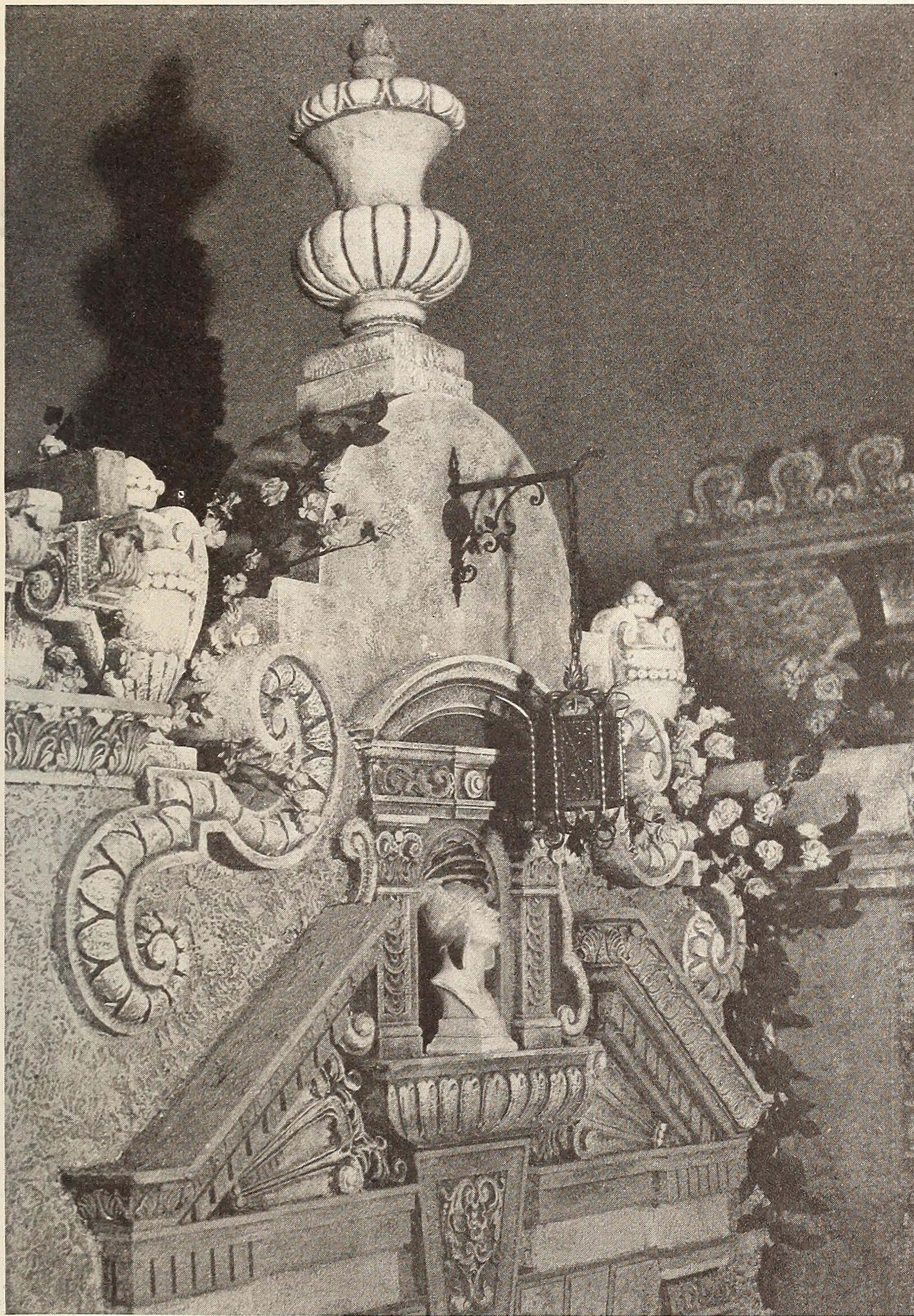
Stars always featured the opening of a theatre while Marcus Loew was alive. Today the men who control the destinies of motion

pictures cannot be so easily persuaded to part with their high salaries attractions even for a short period and for a purpose which will eventually benefit themselves as much as anyone else.

So now it occasionally happens, according to Turner, that the advertising for an opening is obtained through different channels and while not quite so bombastic as that furnished through the stars of the screen, it is none the less effective. Turner opened the Valencia in the following manner.

His first move, to secure the right sort of a newspaper "break," was to make a deal with a local paper with the largest A B C circulation to sell enough advertising for the

and How Mr. Turner Staged Its Debut



Detail of the auditorium decorative treatment, typical of the entire theatre.

paper to fill a certain section which would be devoted to the big event. Turner's editorial copy, of course, was to be subject to the blue pencil of the regular editors.

Then he went around to the contractor and got a full page ad out of him. He applied the same system to the people who furnished the upholstery, the chairs, the hangings, the plumbing, the lighting and the thousand and one other things that go toward the construction of a first class house.

When it came to the question of make-up, Turner would not permit the sheet to deviate from its regular lay-out. "A great many publicity men," he said, "fill a sheet with a lot of rot so that it looks like a put-up job. People

won't read it. But if you make it like the rest of the paper and write news instead of slop, the public will read it. Everybody is interested in the movies. And everybody wants to know what his or her home town is doing along the amusement line.

"When you've sold your press section, the job is about done. All that remains is the regular billboard advertising and a certain amount of newspaper copy which, of course, should have been carried some time in advance. The thing to emphasize is the show that you are putting on. Don't waste time trying to tell the public how beautiful your house is.

"People won't go to a theatre because they

think a place is pretty. They'll find that out when they get there. But to get them there you've got to sell them on the show."

In opening with stars, Turner gets just as much if not more advertising, but he gets it in a different way. The negotiations with the leading paper, of course, do not vary. It always has to be the best and biggest paper because the smaller ones, in self defense, have to follow through and carry the story. Whereas, if he chooses a small paper, the big one can ignore the whole business and get away with it.

The stars he uses as a lever to pry advertising from the pockets of conservative local retailers. And as a matter of fact, it is always money well spent. He has files jammed to the top with letters from advertisers thanking him for the money they spent on what he sold them. "It is a pleasure to tell you how fully satisfied we are," wrote the owner of shoe store who had never done any big advertising until he met Turner.

Let us take St. Louis and the opening of Loew's State there on August 21, 1924, as a typical example. The *Star* was the best paper in St. Louis so Turner went to see Arthur Kay, business manager, to submit his proposition. It was hot weather, something like 109 degrees in the shade, and our publicity expert, in no good humor, had determined to sell full pages or nothing at all.

Kay laughed at him, told him he might as well get boiled right away without bothering to sell such space. He called it impossible. It had never been done there before.

Turner went to the Cadillac people, who because of some private rumpus, had not advertised in the *Star* for two years. He said that he wanted forty Cadillacs which had never been on the street before. These were for Mr. Loew and the stars to ride in. There were only 30 stars at this particular opening. The nine other cars were filled with local lights to give the occasion an air of dignity. Cadillac took a page "To greet the city's distinguished guests."

Turner next went to the house of Finkelstein, which "interprets the modes of Paris in terms appealing to America," and informed said house that Loew's State theatre had selected it as one of the locations for a motion picture to be taken in St. Louis. The house of Finkelstein took a full-page advertising the fact. Even the little models were all hot and bothered.

Turner told Messrs. Grimm & Gorly that Claire Windsor, the film star, would hold an informal reception in their store on Friday morning, August 22. Messrs. Grimm & Gorly took a page and told the world that there would be souvenir flowers for everyone.

Lanathan's were delighted to know that one of the stars would come to their shop and would probably be filmed in front or inside it. Lanathan's, in a full-page ad, urged everyone to be present, stating, that a little later the picture would be shown at Loew's State theatre as part of a story of interest to all style loving women.

And so on and so forth. There was not an advertisement in the special Loew's State section of 16 pages that was less than a full page. It was several days before Arthur Kay had fully recovered. He attributed this to the heat.

New York, three years before, had been a tougher town. Then it had taken Turner 14 weeks to sell his advertising section in the *American* at a rate of \$21.50 an inch. And in that there had been only one full page.

In Dayton he carried off a stunt that put the name of the theatre on the lips of every-

(Continued on page 128)

LOEW'S NEW VALENCIA Continued from page 121



Terry Turner

one. It was not a new theatre, simply an old mausoleum of a place always held in bad repute, which Loews took over and renovated. Still, there was no excitement and it was hard to get people interested in the thing. The weather was bad, too, which did not help matters.

So Turner had a die cast and 50,000 keys made. Ten or 12 men were hired to distribute the keys all over the town. An advertisement was inserted in one of the papers to the effect that the key of the theatre had been lost and that the person returning it would be the theatre's guest. Well, the newspaper office was jammed and you could not get into the lobby of the theatre. The business manager of the paper was peeved and threw the advertisement out.

That night Turner went over to the opposition sheet and bought 25,000 copies as they came off the press. Across each one of them in red ink he stamped, "Loew's opens on Monday." He gave the newsboys 50 cents each to shout this out as they sold the paper on the street.

Governor Cox, the publisher, was very much annoyed and had Turner up on the carpet. But the theatre went over with a bang.

When Loew's State was opened in Memphis, Turner got the Shriners to head the parade with their band. The Shriners were tickled pink to do it (they seldom had such a good excuse), and their endorsement locally enhanced the prestige of the stars, who were sometimes thought by the country people (who came for miles to see the thing) to be just outside the pale.

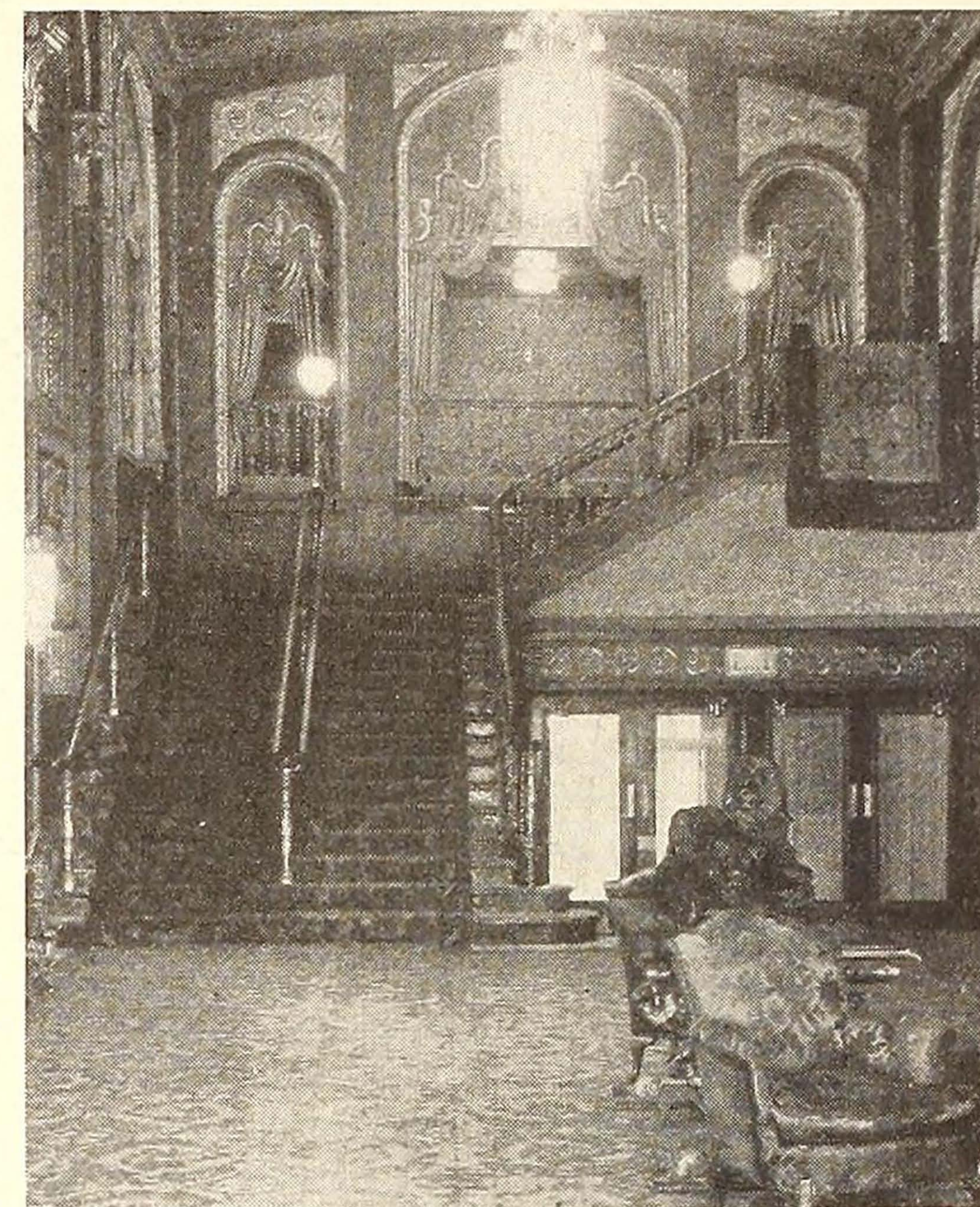
He also arranged to have 150 bombs exploded from the housetops to let the waiting thousands know just when the stars had arrived.

As it happened, he forgot to tell anybody about this last bright idea. When the explosion came, the stars shrieked and the good townspeople were dumb with fear. It was half an hour before order was restored and the parade could proceed. But it gave the people something to talk about for another decade or so.

"Opening a theatre is not as hard as it is cracked up to be," says Turner. "You've got to be able to handle publicity, to think up ideas and to sell advertising. I've opened 42 and it has been a different proposition with each one of them. A new theatre usually represents an investment of over a million dollars. And your leading townspeople are interested in it, and to put it over big, you should secure their co-operation. And that's about all there is to it if you don't count tremendous energy and lots of ambition."

Terry Turner is 35 years old. His home town is Baltimore and he started his career as a cub reporter on the *Baltimore News*. He worked up to the position of assistant city editor and handled Billy Sunday on the side. Then he did readers and ads for the local Loew's theatre for an extra eight dollars a week. S. H. Meinhold of Loew's came to Baltimore and fired everyone in the theatre, giving Turner the job of managing it at \$30 a week. Managerial work in those days consisted of being bookkeeper, assistant cashier, seeing that the lavatories were clean and mopping up the lobby after the evening performance.

Turner was about ready to quit when Marcus Loew called up and asked him how soon



Foyer
LOEW'S STATE
Providence, R. I.
Rapp & Rapp, Architects

he could leave for St. Louis. Turner said, "In 20 minutes," and left in half an hour to become manager of the Crescent at \$35 a week.

He was there three months before he was transferred to Hamilton, Canada, where a gale demolished the marquee and blew in the side of the theatre the second day he was there. Turner wired Loew for instructions. "Do you want me to put the bricks back?" Loew replied.

Then for a while Turner went around the country doing road press work and helping out the weak sisters. Presently he organized the publicity department of the Southern and Southwestern Circuit at Atlanta under Mr. Schiller. Later he was general manager in Toronto and then headed publicity on the coast. Now he directs it from New York and, incidentally, handles all the openings.