

expensive today to construct or maintain monuments of the spaciousness, solidity and scale of McKim, Mead & White's magnificent adaptation of the Roman Baths of Caracalla for Pennsylvania Station or the great glass and steel train room that so superbly expressed the impressive technology of the beginning of our century. The ultimate tragedy is that such architectural nobility has become economically obsolete, so that we must destroy it for shoddier buildings and lesser values.

Kill Him, but Save the Scalp

Among the saddest words of tongue or pen—at least from a civic point of view—was Park Commissioner Newbold Morris' recent epitaph for the doomed Pennsylvania Station, scheduled to be demolished soon for a new Madison Square Garden project.

"Pennsylvania Station is one of the city's great buildings," he announced with feeling. "I'm working on a plan to save the columns."

As tragic as the loss of an important municipal landmark must inevitably be, how much sadder is the thought of those eighty-four disembodied Doric columns banished to Flushing Meadows, as the well-intentioned Commissioner proposes. With what smug, sentimental self-deception we assume that by making some pleasant, picturesque arrangement of left-over bits and pieces, after razing the original, we are accomplishing an act of preservation! Nothing could be further from the truth. Once the total work of architecture is destroyed, it is gone forever. Even more regrettable than the demolition of a notable landmark is the substitution of commercial structures of no particular distinction or style.

It is another tragic truth that it is much too

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.