# modern railways

**JANUARY 65** 

3/-

## **SULZER**

A Sulzer engined Type 2 working freight in just another B.R. goods depot where these locomotives are employed on numerous duties.



despite some well-publicised misfortunes—diesel traction troubles that have reduced availability of one class to nearly 50 per cent, and miscalculations in the revised Paddington suburban service, for example.

There is, inevitably, the disagreeable reverse of the higher productivity coin-redundancies. Why should the onslaught on manpower be especially savage? At the worst period of WR deficits, to refer once again to Mr. Ibbotson's paper, salaries and wages accounted for no less than 65 per cent of the Region's entire expenditure. Even now they total about 62 per cent. In other words, since the trend of wages is upward from year to year, and a long way ahead of any price increases the railway can impose if it wants to stay competitive, it would have needed an enormous amount of additional traffic to bridge the income-revenue gap if the labour force, accounting for so much of the Region's expenditure, were to remain untouched. The blindest optimist for the railway's chances could not have hoped for traffic gains on that scale. To some degree the staff reduction will be painless because ordinary wastage is not being countered by fresh recruitment. But in time there will even be pleasure, for higher productivity brings rewards, as some railwaymen are beginning to realise-at mechanised yards, for example, where there is no grade lower than head shunter. For the smaller, picked labour force who remain with the railway there should be bigger individual shares of the wage and salary half of the expenditure cake, as well as jobs of greater responsibility and meaning. The railway ought to become once more a concern that there is both prestige and decent reward in working for.

### Strong case for a new image

It is a pity that the public's first hint of British Railways' new corporate identity programme, featured in this issue, should come from a premature leak of the system's revised title, "British Rail". This is the one dubious item of the whole scheme, which was bound to be mocked by ill-wishers who knew little or nothing of the rest. It is extremely debatable, first of all, whether a change of name is crucial to the updating of an image. No airline that one can think of thought it desirable to re-style itself with the change from piston engines to turbo-props or jets. But if there is to be a renaming, surely the new style must be meaningful to the world at large? Merely to drop one syllable from the previous title, largely on the grounds that the result ranges better in publicity displays, and thereby to achieve a name no more relevant to the organisation—in fact, less so—is to invite a prejudiced and unjustified reaction to the whole scheme as a piece of designers' preciosity from a good many of the public. "And now, I suppose, to British Water" is a gibe with too much point for comfort. Initial reservations about the new symbol, on the other hand, are fast changing into approval. A powerful suggestion of nervous energy in the crude vitality of its arrowheads begins to grow on one-and after all, anything would be an improvement on the previous heraldic abortion. On another aspect, it is a pity that the new coaching stock livery does not seem to provide for distinctive refreshment car styling, the Pullmans apart.

That said about details, the case for a unifying and updating visual scheme of this kind is to us unanswerable. Far too much of the front BR shows to the public—liveries, uniforms, station styles, ill-assorted signposting and publicity material—is still an ill-thought out perpetuation of steam-age railway fashion. The nation in general has shown that it is much more likely to buy use of dieselised and particularly of electrified railways, operating at new standards of speed, than steam. It must be convinced that BR are not merely changing one form of traction for another and running the same kind of service. A brand-new, all-embracing visual identity will do a powerful amount to make the psychological point of a thoroughly transformed transport system.

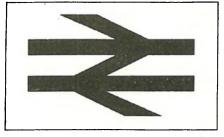
This, of course, assumes that where the scheme is applied the services it will colour have already been modernised in every department and are functioning beyond reasonable reproach. Here one wonders whether the financial approach has been too defensive. The BRB is stressing that the programme will be put into effect gradually, and understandably is making a virtue of the resultant low annual costs. But if the principle is to be adopted that rolling stock or structures will not generally be treated until they are due for overhaul, there seems to be a serious risk of protracted transitional anachronisms that are bound to provoke snide criticism. One station decked out in the new finery may still be used by an indifferent service overdue for updating, while elsewhere glossy new XP64 blue trains may ply from dreary Victorian piles that have not been touched. Unless one properly modernised route or area is given a comprehensive treatment quite soon the scheme may lose a lot of its impact through painfully slow, piecemeal application.

The few who are already complaining that the scheme is a sinful waste of money by a deficit-ridden concern will be aghast at this suggestion that the expenditure should be bigger and faster. But have they ever seriously examined the indirect effects on revenue and on staff morale and energy of a transformed railway environment? Have they, for example, not only studied the financial results of the Glasgow "Blue Trains", also described in this issue, but talked to the passengers who use them, the staff who run them, and looked carefully over the stations and the trains themselves to see how respectfully they have been treated by their users and operators? To cite another case we came across recently, the rebuilding of Chichester station on modern lines, with admirable illuminated signs and excellent passenger accommodation, may have been too expensive for the comfort of the SR's finances. But the stationmaster confirmed our impression that passenger and staff reaction to it was remarkable. Both took immense pride in keeping buffet, waiting rooms, toilets, offices and platforms as tidy as we have ever seen at a BR installation.

A new image unsupported by energy and imagination in operating the railway will, of course, achieve nothing but ridicule. We believe firmly that the one will stimulate the other; and that therefore the BR corporate identity programme is an essential move towards recreation of national pride in the railways, of the kind one senses—and envies—in France and Western Germany.

### Has economy gone too far?

In its zealous trimming of redundant assets and reduction of capital locked up in stocks of spares the BRB has courted losses in other directions. The more vivid tales going the rounds of steam locomotives and wagons sold for scrap and then hurriedly hired back to meet desperate shortages are impossible to confirm. But it is unquestionable that some commercial officers in the Regions are concerned at the merchandise traffic put at risk by the sharp run-down of Vanfits and certain types of container. Undeniable, too, is the waste of expensive diesel traction that has resulted from maintenance hold-ups through shortage of components. Earlier this year a good many locomotives on the Western Region at least were incapacitated for no better reason than lack of replacement brake blocks. More recently, as we reported last month, the Western has had its available diesel locomotive stock severely cut down through a dearth of diesel and engine transmission parts. Even without handicaps of this kind, some maintenance officers are restive at the time that main workshops are taking over diesel locomotive overhauls and complain that capacity has been reduced much too quickly. One was heard to say recently that his biggest obstacle to fulfilment of traffic demands was not defects in his diesels while he had them, but retrieving them



# **British Rail**

## the new image



#### FROM Dr. R. BEECHING, CHAIRMAN OF THE BRB

TO a great extent the future of British Railways depends on what the travelling public and industry think of us. This public image is largely determined by what passengers and industrial users see of British Railways.

Our aim, a truly modern railway shaped to existing and future needs, cannot be achieved overnight. It is being developed phase by phase as fast as possible. But, meanwhile, much remains of the system which is drab, inefficient and out of keeping with the times.

The railways' corporate identity programme is the visible expression of the great managerial effort which has been introduced into the railways in recent times. It is intended to emphasise visually our progress towards a unified, efficient and viable railway system.

K. Beech

BRITISH Railways have embarked upon the most comprehensive and thorough overhaul of their visual image ever attempted in the long history of this country's railways. The new Corporate Identity Programme—to use the official term—is based upon the sound belief that, properly planned and applied, good visual design can act as a powerful selling agent, but one that can be created by comparatively modest expenditure.

For some time, many people inside and outside the industry have felt that BR's public image—or reputation—was lagging behind the technical promise of new locomotives, better carriages, modern signalling etc., and the behind-the-scenes reorganisation of administration and control. Constant efforts to improve have still not fully registered on the public mind. Much remains that is visually out-dated or dull and this tends to be emphasised when it becomes the background to bright new equipment. For example, the diesel Pullmans begin and end some of their journeys at stations with amenities far below the standards of the trains themselves. Of course, a great deal is being done to remedy these obvious deficiencies. But it has become increasingly apparent that a much more comprehensive and fundamental "new look" is needed, if the public—rail users or otherwise—are to be made fully aware of the many striking improvements in course of development.

To be effective, this "new look" must transform every activity of the railway system. Every visual feature must be considered: passenger trains; stations; freight services; town offices and other architecture; signposting; all types of uniforms, dress and accessories; ships; road vehicles; printed matter of all kinds; and every branch of publicity. In fact, there has got to be one of the biggest industrial facelifts the

country has seen, in which nothing representative of BR will escape the designer's net.

The basic visual elements which can be used to create an effective corporate image, or identity, consist of a symbol, a logotype (or name style) and house colours. These used in conjunction, or separately, must be immediately recognisable and must become indelibly associated with the undertaking. Well-known examples of firmly-established corporate identities are those of Shell, BEA and London Transport. Compared to these, the visual impact of BR hitherto has been a confused collection of symbols, names and colours, with semi-traditional, semi-Regional influences. To take one aspect, colours for BR rolling stock were chosen without any consideration for an overall house colour scheme-which, in turn, did not really exist, except on the Southern Region, where the wholesale use of green achieved a degree of purely Regional identity. The five other Regions were all given maroon passenger rolling stock (although the WR dissented for a brief period), despite the long-standing association of that colour with the LMR and its forerunner, the LMS. Thus neither a national nor a Regional house colour scheme could evolve satisfactorily; moreover, any potential publicity value of the six Regional colours was lost.

Likewise, neither the first nor the second attempt to produce a BR emblem resulted in a design either striking enough or adaptable enough for its purpose. The additional use of a third—and meaningless—emblem, the "sausage", for station signs and publicity only confused the situation, which was worse confounded by the variety of name styles, from "British Railways" to Regional titles and then those of individual lines or divisions, which have been used. All these many and inconsistent visual manifestations have muddled the image of

an undertaking which in every other department of its business has been trying to present the appearance of a unified, efficient concern.

Before nationalisation each of the "Big Four" had a clearly distinguishable identity, emphasised by long-standing differences in the design of locomotives, rolling stock and livery schemes. To retain these loyalties and distinctions in face of increasing standardisation and the creation of a unified national network—in which Regional boundaries have altered several times—is quite impracticable. Logic demands a clean break with the past on this score alone, quite apart from the imperative need to reflect modification of physical assets.

A corporate identity, therefore, is the visual expression of unified management. It requires standardisation throughout the organisation of a single code of visual practice that will fittingly characterise the services it offers. After an extensive investigation by a working party set up by the BRB Design Panel and including the Board's consultants and its Design, Architect's, Commercial and Publicity departments, a new BR corporate identity programme was recently drafted and submitted to the BRB. The Board has now approved it, subject to certain reservations where they consider further research and development is desirable. Its application will go ahead under the guidance of a Corporate Identity Steering Committee, chaired by the BRB Director of Industrial Design, Mr. George Williams.

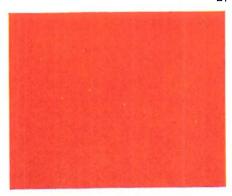
#### The new symbol

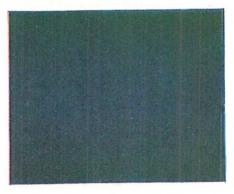
The symbol is based upon the idea of two-way traffic movement. It can also be interpreted as rail tracks, and the arrows combine to produce an electrification flash. With an easily recognisable, forceful and simple outline it can be reproduced in a wide range of materials and sizes without losing its impact. Thus it meets the most important requirements of a good symbol. It can be painted, stencilled, printed, cast in metal, formed in plastics, shaped in wood, or engraved on surfaces with equal success. Whether in relief or flat, it retains its form. Initially it has been approved to replace the BR "sausage" on all advertising and promotional material, station facades, and certain other applications including ship funnels and house flags. It is not yet finally approved for application to rolling stock.

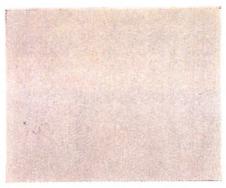
For general public usage the abbreviation "British Rail" will be adopted. This is considered more forceful, simple to read and comprehend. Moreover, it is more easily accommodated in a variety of settings than the full style "British Railways". As a logotype (or mark), "British Rail" has been

#### Text by Brian Haresnape

Photos by British Railways



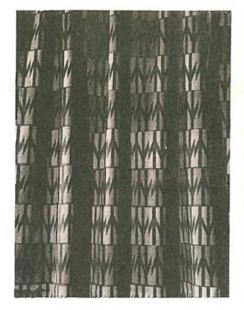


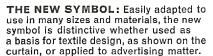


HOUSE COLOURS: Three distinctive colours—monastral (or rail) blue, flame red and pearl grey—have been adopted as the new BR house colours.

**SHIPS:** The new BR ship livery, shown in a Sam Lambert photo of a model of the *Duke of Rothesay*. A number of ships have already been repainted.











PRINTED PUBLICITY: The new symbol and logotype are here used as a straightforward "mark" on two newspaper advertisements for BR shipping routes. Publicity will make the most immediate public impact of the new programme. By use of the new elements in this way, a quick effect can be achieved at no extra cost. The symbol replaces the BR "sausage" for all advertising material, also on station facades and nameboards.

carefully drawn, weighted and spaced to provide the ideal balance for the words, and to be in character with the new symbol.

#### A standard alphabet

A full sans-serif alphabet, in line with modern typographic design, has been prepared for general application. In addition, specifications have been drawn up for the use of type-faces of the same family for printed matter.

Approval has so far been granted for use of the name style, logotype and alphabet on advertising and promotional material and stations.

and stations.

#### House colours and livery

The new house colours are monastral (or rail) blue, pearl grey and flame red. The colours reflect—but with their own subtle distinctions of shade—the British national colours. The blue (a slightly greenish shade) and pearl grey are to be generally applied, but the flame red will be restricted to smaller areas and used to emphasise the new symbol. A standard livery for passenger rolling stock and all locomotives, based on the new house colours, is considered desirable because this is the most conspicuous means to familiarise the public with the new identity. However, experiments are still in progress to assess the durability and practicability of the new colours before making a final decision. The possibility of using one or more of the existing livery colours as the new house colours was examined, but none were considered to have all the required characteristics or adaptability. Approval has so far been given for use of the house colours on all print and publicity material, on nameboards for selected stations in each Region, for ships and on certain passenger trains. Regional colours will be systematically abandoned.

#### A design manual

The success of the programme will depend to a large extent on the way it is integrated with every element of railway operation. Haphazard and ill-planned application would only result in wasted effort and money. To ensure that not only the policy, but also the ways to apply its detail are fully understood a design manual is in production. This will be the detailed

"book of rules" for all those who have the job of executing the corporate identity programme in the Regions.

#### Publicity will be transformed first

Broadly speaking there are five main fields of application for the corporate identity. These are: publicity (press advertising, sales promotion literature, posters and notices); architecture (station nameboards and signs, offices and travel agencies); locomotives and rolling stock; ships; and road vehicles. In addition, there are small items involved, such as glassware, cutlery, menu cards, crockery, book matches, carpets, curtains, plastic surfaces and moquettes. Obviously the speed with which the new styles can be introduced is dependent upon the scale of the job and the costs involved. The item to which it can be applied most quickly and cheaply is printed matter, and this was begun from December 27. Before long, the new symbol, logotype and house colours will be in standard, nationwide use on all BR publicity.

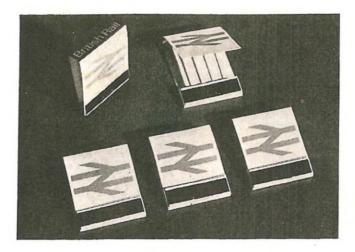
#### The new rolling stock livery

Good colour is probably the most important factor in creating an improved image. The dull maroon and varying shades of green now employed scarcely symbolise a bright, forward-looking concern and they compare unfavourably with the colour schemes of many of the railways' strongest competitors. A new colour scheme for passenger trains and locomotives is needed that is clearly expressive of modernity. However, the choice of a new livery is not based purely on aesthetics.

There are good reasons for painting freight stock in a livery quite different from that used on passenger stock. It is operationally desirable also to distinguish special equipment, such as Post Office vans and insulated containers. But as it is passenger train livery which makes the most impact on the public, the selection of this must be the primary concern; other liveries will then be derived from it or designed to harmonise with it.

Experience both in Britain and on the Continent shows that when passenger train colour schemes are diversified, either in the interests of Regional identity or to give emphasis to special trains such as TEE and Pullmans, a livery of unique

continued on page 32



**SMALL DETAILS:** The thoroughness of the programme is exemplified by its attention to small details, such as book matches. This form of promotion has long been typical of BR's publicity-conscious competitors.

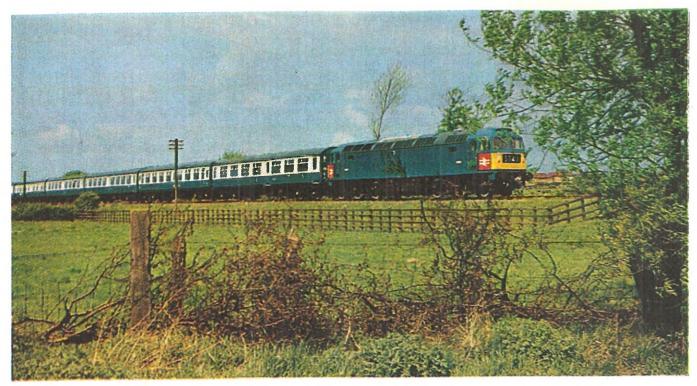


TRAVEL AGENTS: In many cases the potential passenger's first contact with BR is the local travel agent, in town or city shopping centre. Re-design of brochures, window displays and posters will help to sell a new image of rail travel to the man in the street.

### publicity

PRINTED MATTER: Already noticeable improvements have been made in the quality and originality of a great deal of BR promotion material for passenger services. The examples below demonstrate how the symbol and logotype can link a variety of printed matter with British Railways in the public mind. This is particularly important wherever BR publicity will be seen alongside competitors' propaganda. The symbol can be adapted to a wide range of eye-catching designs, like the cover of the brochures for business travel, shown below, where it is repeated to produce a formalised pattern reminiscent of railway track layout diagrams.







ROLLING STOCK: The first experimental application of the corporate identity elements was to the XP64 train (above), but the effect was soon spoilt by substitution of a green "Deltic" for the blue-liveried Brush Type 4 diesel. Early reactions to XP64 suggested the need for a slightly darker shade of blue, also that the red panels and symbol on the locomotive were too large and tended to conflict with the yellow warning panels. No firm decision on rolling stock liveries has yet been taken; experiments to determine the most satisfactory scheme are still in progress, and authority to paint 50 four-car LMR 25KV suburban multiple-units now under construction has been granted.











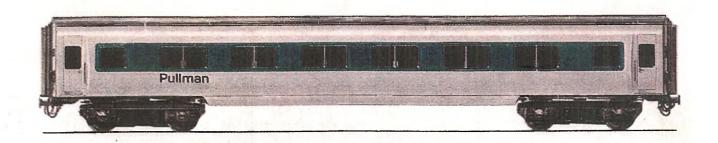
**SYMBOL AND LOGOTYPE:** This will normally be reproduced in blue for publicity purposes. According to application and suitability the shade of blue can be varied without losing effect, but flame red will be adhered to more strictly.

**LINER TRAINS:** Liner trains will benefit by starting from scratch with the new scheme. In this impression of a Liner train container mounted on a road trailer, the grey livery, with flame red band, hints at the powerful visual effect of a complete train. Provision has been made in the livery for traders to place their own trademark in the upper-right hand corner of the container sides.

# British Rail

# a corporate identity

PULLMAN LIVERY: Pullmans are included in the overall corporate identity scheme. Two Pullman liveries are in current use—umber and cream, and the diesel blue and white. Suggested is a standard scheme that reverses the conventional disposition of the colour masses, with a broad blue band along the bodyside at window level, and pearl grey as the predominant colour. This scheme is similar to recent practice on the Canadian National and Japanese National Railways. However, as already observed, the final version of the standard rolling stock livery has yet to be decided.



characteristics will attract so much attention that it depresses excessively the status of the rest of the system's rolling stock. To avoid this ill-effect, a railway needs one clearly recognisable, integrating livery without any variations for specific Regions, services or types of passenger vehicle. Locomotives should also be in the same basic colour, relying mainly on their different form and the disposition of windows and louvres to distinguish one type from another.

The pristine appearance of new paintwork is no criterion by which to judge a colour scheme for rolling stock. The choice of colours must make allowances for the outcome in service of dirt, abrasions and a gradual loss of brightness, also the effects of ordinary urban atmospheres and lighting, which filter out much of the colour, decreasing its strength and purity. Thus a successful new livery must be vigorous, so that it will always look as nearly fresh and clean as possible; it must use paints which are intrinsically fresh and full of colour, rather than browns or greys. The SR green probably fulfils these requirements better than any of the other colours at present in use on BR, but it tends to be too institutional in its associations. The new monastral blue fulfils these requirements very satisfactorily and has the advantage of being a colour not so rigidly traditional to railway usage (except for Gresley's garter blue pre-war streamliners on the LNER.) However, only prolonged trials in service can really demonstrate its effectiveness and durability for rolling stock. The first experimental application was made last May to the Derby-built XP64 train and to Brush/Sulzer Type 4 No. D1733. Following this initial experiment a slightly darker shade of the blue was considered desirable. The BRB has now authorised the painting of 200 carriages of LMR 25kV suburban electric m.u. stock, presently under construction, in this darker blue livery. Only main-line stock would have the pearl-grey window areas; suburban stock is envisaged as plain blue. No final decisions will be made until these trials have demonstrated the full effects of time and wear on the new colour scheme.

Pullman stock will employ the same basic colours as other stock, but a case can be made for a special arrangement of them in this instance. One proposal (illustrated on page 31) visualises pearl grey as the predominant bodyside colour, with a wide band of the blue at window level. Freight vehicles will remain as at present—bauxite red and ice blue, with yellow for road vehicles. These are considered to harmonise well with the

new house colours. New types of service, such as company trains and Liner trains, will have liveries in harmony with the overall scheme.

#### New ship livery is welcomed

The repainting of BR ships in the new colours is already well under way. By the time this article is in print some 20 vessels of the fleet are expected to be in the new colours. Initial reactions approve the colours and symbol as exemplifying the best of modern marine practice. Certainly the visual transformation, from drab black to rich blue for the hull and from buff yellow to flame red for the funnel, is a striking one. The superstructure is decked out in a light blue-grey. The symbol is painted in white on the flame red funnel, and is featured on the house flag. Lifeboats are painted white.

#### Architectural decor

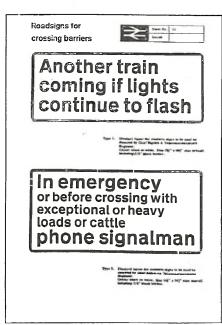
Uniformity of colour in decor and fixed equipment will be avoided. Following recently established practice, paint colours for stations will still be chosen to harmonise with the colours of unpainted surfaces (e.g. brick, stone, tiles, etc.) and with the character of the surroundings (rural, urban, industrial). But the corporate identity of BR can be established without delay in stations of all sizes throughout the system—despite variety of decor-by uniform treatment of station nameboards, signs and advertisements. Colour and lettering on all directional signs can conform to the new standards and the symbol and logotype be used wherever appropriate. Regional colours for station signs will gradually be replaced as a result of this scheme. In addition, pictograms will be used in place of signboards for parts of the station in general use, such as lavatories and telephones. This is in keeping with the practice of many Continental systems and of airports. Use of the new standard alphabet and house colours, plus the pictograms, will assist the travelling public, who expect the same clarity and legibility on all stations, regardless of their Regional ownership. An essential part of the new programme is the use of the symbol and logotype on station facades—the front door to rail travel.

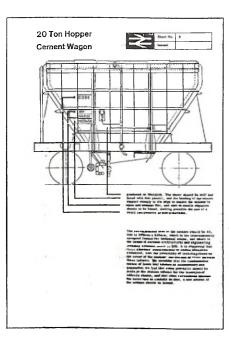
A difficult problem is the conflict between commercial advertising and directional signs, especially on the larger stations with concourses, or crowded platform areas. Ideally,

MANUAL OF DESIGN: A comprehensive manual of design is in preparation. This will act as a mandatory guide to all those responsible for implementing the corporate identity programme, both

BR staff and outside contractors. It will lay down standards for every aspect of the programme and will be produced so that it can be added to as required, to cover new developments. Illustrated are

three specimen pages showing how the various elements of the identity will be handled: standards for roadsigns at automatic barriers; lettering on a wagon; and porters' uniforms.







commercial advertising would be separated from functional station signs in order to leave the latter in possession of the foreground. Unfortunately, the most sought-after (and, of course, remunerative) sites are those which dominate a station. Only very careful siting of station signs in relation to advertising, and the use of legible lettering and suitable colours—such as are now to be introduced—will overcome this problem. At present the confusion is increased in some cases because the Regional colour concerned is not sufficiently brilliant to stand out from colourful advertising displays. Further improvements can be made, whenever station improvement schemes are in progress, by seizing the opportunity to group commercial advertising sites. The policy of minor station improvements will continue alongside implementation of the corporate identity programme. Already many stations on all Regions have benefited from face-lift schemes of this kind, at relatively small cost. London's main-line termini are among those receiving such attention and one or two LMR suburban stations in the London area will be among the first to receive the new corporate identity elements.

Complete implementation of the programme will obviously take some years. All new features of modernisation, such as stations, Liner trains, ships, etc., can be imprinted with the new look right from the start, but generally the scheme will go hand-in-hand with routine renovation, repair or replacement schemes; stations, for example, will only be dealt with as they become due for a facelift or other modification. A phased programme, with priorities selected from the points of view of practicability and desirable emphasis, will be related to a strict control of annual cost. Nevertheless, sufficient evidence of the new corporate identity should be apparent by the end of this year to make an effect upon the public image of BR.

**Credits:** Design Research Unit, consultants to the Design Panel, British Railways Board: for general development work on the corporate identity. Jock Kinneir: station signposting.



ARCHITECTURE: Application of the corporate identity to architecture will mainly be in conjunction with facelift schemes, or new construction. Uniformity of colour for decor and fixed equipment will be avoided, and paintwork colours will be chosen to suit each individual application, its surroundings and its architectural style. Use of the new corporate identity elements—symbol, logotype and house colours—will be restricted to fascias and nameboards. Advertising, of course, will also display these elements in most parts of the station. Illustrated are theoretical applications to several different types of station; Hampton Court shows how an old station can be treated without submerging its character; Coventry typifies the best of modern rail architecture.

continued over







#### Architecture-continued

STATIONS: Victoria illustrates the effectiveness of the new style in a large-scale application. The directional sign is an effective use of the symbol to show a rail entrance. Tamworth, represented by a scale model, integrates all the elements of the programme—symbol, colours and logotype.

