in the members curling or twisting on account of one-half of the section being much thinner than the other. Simplicity in design is a characteristic of modern construction (see also p. 97).

SKIRTINGS OR PLINTHS are provided to protect the wall plaster and to cover the joint between the floor boards and plaster. Several sections are shown in Figs. 64 and 65. The size varies, but the depth rarely exceeds 7-in. unless for very large rooms.

The best method of securing skirtings is shown at Q, Fig. 64, and B and E, Fig. 65, where horizontal rough grounds are plugged at about 27-in. intervals in the vertical joints of the brickwork. Skirtings which are 4-in. or less in depth only require one set of grounds. When two rows of grounds are fixed, the space between them is not always filled with plaster, and when it is, care should be taken by the plasterer to ensure that the face of the plaster does not project beyond the grounds.

The cheaper and more usual method of securing skirtings is to fix them direct to plugs which have been driven into the vertical joints of the wall at about 3-ft. intervals. For deep skirtings the plugs are staggered, with the plugs fixed alternately near the floor and top of the plinths. The skirting at R, Fig. 64, is shown plugged to the wall.

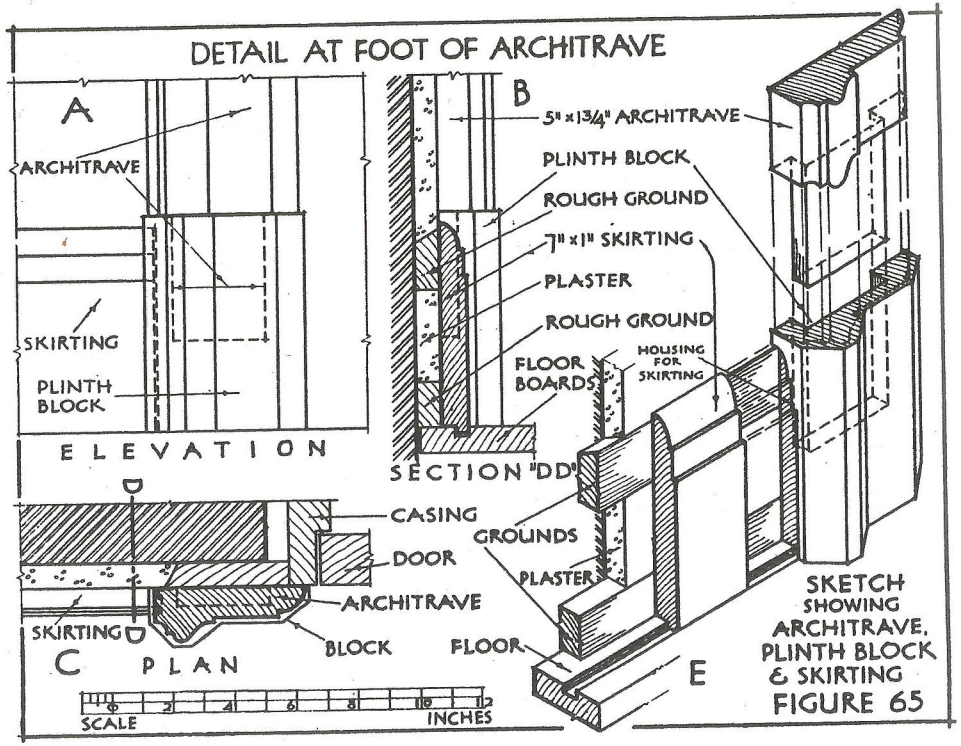
It is the general practice to fit or *scribe* the lower edge of the skirting to the floor, which is more or less irregular.

> Scribing is done by placing the piece of skirting in position and packing or wedging up the lower end until the top edge is level; compasses (see 5, Fig. 67) are taken and, with the points apart equal to the height that the lowest portion of the floor is below the bottom edge of the skirting, are drawn along the face of the skirting with the points of the compass in a vertical plane; as the lower point follows the irregularities of the floor the other marks a parallel line on the plinth; the lower edge of the skirting is then sawn along this irregular line and thus a tight fit between the skirting and floor is assured when the former is fixed.

A gap invariably appears between this bottom edge of the skirting and the floor boards due to the combined shrinkage of the skirting and the floor joists. This allows both dust and currents of air to enter ground floor rooms from the space below. A small ($\frac{3}{8}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$-in.) quadrant cover mould as shown at R, Fig. 64, may be bradded to the floor to prevent this; alternately, the gap may be filled with a material called *plastic wood* which is pressed in whilst in a plastic condition, smoothed over with a knife and sand-papered over when set to bring it flush with the face of the skirting. A better method (but one which is only adopted in first class work on account of its expense) is shown at Q, Fig. 64, and E, Fig. 65; a tongue is formed on the lower edge of the skirting and this is fitted into a groove formed in the flooring.

Several joints between the ends of skirtings are shown in Fig. 64. The cheapest method is to mitre the ends at both external and internal angles as shown at Y. Another cheap internal joint consists of scribing one end to the face of the other which has been tightly and squarely fitted into the angle. A better joint for internal angles is shown at Z; one piece of the skirting is grooved from the bottom edge to the bottom of the moulding, the end of the adjacent piece is tongued and the moulded portion is scribed to that of the first piece. A joint used in very good work for both internal and external angles is shown at A′; the thin hardwood cross-tongue is glued and the joint is assembled before the pieces are fixed to the grounds. The mitred and rebated joint at B′ (also called a *lipped* joint) is a good form for external angles; cross-bradding as shown is necessary.

As indicated in Fig. 65, skirtings are housed into plinth blocks. If the latter



are not provided, the ends of the skirtings should be let into architraves, otherwise cracks will show when shrinkage occurs.

The designs of skirtings, architraves and panel mouldings when associated together should conform; thus, the skirting at Q, Fig. 64 harmonizes with the architrave K, Fig. 52 and the panel mouldings N or A′, Fig. 48, and the skirting moulding W, Fig. 64, architrave O, Fig. 64 and panel mouldings V or G′, Fig. 48 form an agreeable combination; the chamfered or bevelled edge shown at R and S, Fig. 64 is preferred when a simple effect is desired. Alternative skirting mouldings are shown at T, U and V, Fig. 64; the cavetto skirting at X, Fig. 64 provides an effective sanitary finish, but the labour in forming the trenching in the floor to receive it is costly.