

homogeneous enough for any one. Hard by is the Railway headquarter building, one of the finest buildings of its size in the world; of excellent design, homogeneous, a gracious ornament to the city. Further on there is the Customs Building, a handsome characteristic, well-designed pile, as far from deserving the offence of the Empire Reviewer's defence as is the dome of St. Paul's, London. If the reviewer wrote of the Year One he might be forgiven. But writing of to-day he must be convicted of not knowing as much as he ought about what he is writing for the information of others. The evidence of the public buildings in Wellington alone is conclusive against him.

It does not stand alone, for there are public buildings in every one of our cities using the term for the four chief centres, public buildings which are an ornament to their city and a credit to the profession that designed them. Take the Railway Station of Dunedin, an exceedingly handsome building, criticised much for many things locally, but admired with unanimous decision in all quarters. Take the old University building of the same city, one of the finest in the Dominion erected forty-two

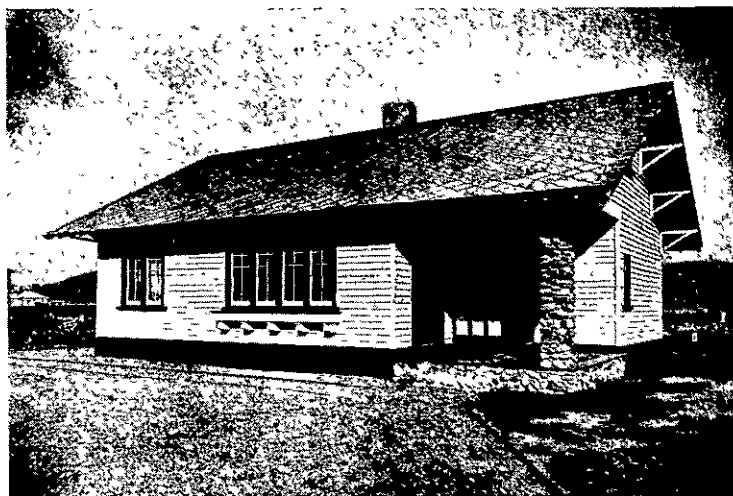
finished. Wellington has a Basilica and two churches (St. Peter's and St. Andrew's) which ought to keep critics from spending all their ink in negation, and the old pro-cathedral of St. Paul is a striking proof of how well the pioneers of colonisation understood the requisites of church building in wood. Christchurch has a Gothic cathedral (Anglican), not designed by a local architect it is true, but forming part of the Dominion architecture, and therefore not to be passed over silently by anyone undertaking to speak of the buildings erected by the people of the Dominion. That is a cathedral of magnificent design and proportion, small as cathedrals go truly, but a wonderful church for so small a community to have built. The Catholic Cathedral is also on the small side, but at the same time creditable to the community that built it, and a fine example of Italian architecture. Napier has a splendid cathedral in brick and stone. Dunedin has three fine church buildings, First Church, Knox Church, and St. Joseph's, and Invercargill has two. There are besides churches of all sizes scattered throughout the Dominion, correct in design, striking in appearance, and in the aggregate lifting the

square, Christchurch; Lambton quay and the reclaimed ground, where the big warehouses are, Wellington. These are good to look at, and the beginnings of a state of things of which the next generation will be proud.

Take Lambton quay between Woodward street and the foot of Willis street. Along that stretch the fine buildings are the rule, some of them very elegant, and all designed with considerable taste and regard to their positions and purposes. The same applies to the neighbourhood where are the National and Australasian Banks, Nathan's Building, and a good many others; part of a list they are comprising for its highest examples the Bank of New Zealand, King's Buildings, the Bank of New South Wales, and others too well known to require recapitulation. Among all these one can pick out many examples which give the contradiction emphatic to the generalities of banality which the reviewer of the Empire mistakes for sound criticism. Their style and materials, together with the workmanship in their construction, will stand examination of the most searching order, and have nothing to fear from comparison, no matter how close. Of course there are



LIVING ROOM OF BUNGALOW. Hoggard & Prouse, Architects.



MR MCCOSH CLARK'S WEEK-END BUNGALOW, TRENTHAM

years ago, but requiring no apology from any critic faint-hearted or otherwise. The Post Office of Christchurch is far above the level described by the Reviewer, so is the Supreme Court; and the old Provincial Council Building, besides being of very handsome exterior, contains the handsomest hall in the Dominion, one that would pass muster in any part of the world for imposing design and exquisiteness of detail. The Post Office and the Land Office at Auckland are standing contradictions to the reviewer, and as for the smaller towns there are public buildings in many of them which are excellent examples of what they ought to be. Moreover, the school buildings scattered all over the Dominion contain some very good examples of the school as reason would have it.

Our ecclesiastical architecture is not in a state to compare with older countries filled with master pieces as they are, representing the product of many centuries of effort. Still there are some fine examples, quite enough to redeem the Dominion from the reproach of the supercilious and the reputation of the Dominion architects from the sweeping disgrace of the reviewer who is afraid to give sympathy where he undertakes to defend. There are fine churches in Auckland, at the head of which, for beauty and correctness of form, stands the Church of St. Matthew, lately

architecture of their towns from indiscriminating condemnation.

To those who know the by-ways of the Dominion, a recollection will occur in this connection readily. It is of the little parish church at Otekaieke, built in the old Norman style, of Oamaru stone, solid chaste, a very gem of simplicity and elegance, correct and typical, from the design of Mr. Kane, of Christchurch, who built so many fine schools for the Provincial Council and for the Canterbury Education Board in his day.

Neither do the ordinary street buildings lend themselves to a criticism which is a mere negation. In some of the cities, notably Auckland and Wellington, the chief defect of the new buildings is that they are stucco. The parsimony of the men who order the buildings shuts out all considerations of the beauty of material and of the honesty of plain brick and stone. But the defect apart, the architecture is often of an order to be treated with respect. The chief cities are at all events emerging from the old state of unconventional beginnings to a style of much pretensions and some beauty. There are some streets in no way deserving the slurs of the reviewer. Queen street and Wellesley street, Auckland, Princes street, Dunedin, together with the streets by the railway station, Hereford street, and Cathedral

mean buildings still in the streets named, and more of them in the other streets, and as you get outwards towards the outskirts of the city the state of things architectural is deplorable. This is paralleled in all the cities and towns of the Dominion—it is but another way of saying that the Dominion is yet young. That, however, is not a reason for unreasoning comprehensiveness of hostile criticism, neither is it for faint-hearted negations of defence.

As to the advice of the man who wants the individuality of a city to be preserved, the first thing needed is the individuality. If there is no individuality it can not be preserved. Each architect can have his own individuality, and a murrain on those who would do anything to stifle it. On the other hand, the suggestion is not bad that some check should be put upon exuberance, so that there may be secured a certain homogeneity of style, so far as is compatible with all the conditions surrounding.

For the present, however, let us, above all things, learn to respect our own so far as it can be respected worthily. There can be no better foundation for greatness—architectural as of other kinds—than honest appreciation of modest worth, just as there can be none worse for the builder than the exaggeration of modesty into genius.