

flowing at an unprecedented rate, that building in the bigger sense of the word is to remain at a standstill until the world's markets are open to us again. Such a supposition is not tenable, for the demands of public service and public accommodation are already insistent.

A solution has to be found for the present difficulties, not a "carry-over" or a "hold-back" policy that will see us through the next three years of industrial turmoil, and eventually land us where we were in our pre-war days, a country boasting of its independence as a whole, and yet depending on other countries for the very material of which it builds its houses, but a real solution that will place us further ahead, and make us more independent than we were before our outside supplies were stopped.

Assuming that a certain proportion of important building must proceed within the next three years, even after making mental provision for some of the wealthy public and private concerns that out of pure timidity cancelled work that was already in hand at the latter end of 1914, (and who incidentally will probably pay a good deal more when fresh tenders are called for the same work which has to be eventually carried out) it seems fairly obvious that such work that is completed will have to be built with Dominion produced material.

This is entirely as it should be, though as we previously pointed out some few items must necessarily be excepted. But we contend that such items of import can and should be cut down to an absolute minimum.

Whether the solution of the difficulties lies entirely with the architects, or whether they should be overcome by collaboration of the architects and master-builders is a point that is not essential so long as the end is obtained, but it seems to us that in those buildings that must of necessity be gone on with in the near future, either Dominion produced material must be found to carry out the accepted designs, or else that the designs themselves must be altered to bring them within the scope of the Dominion materials.

Something will undoubtedly have to be sacrificed here and there in design to make possible the building of factories and large buildings under present conditions, but the sooner those interested in building schemes realize that those conditions actually exist, and are not likely to improve in the near future, and also that an impatient public will not wait indefinitely, the sooner will they bestir themselves to overcome or circumvent the real or imaginary difficulties that up to the present have demanded oversea importations for their solution.

We have no intention of itemizing the various materials that have come by use to be deemed more or less essential in the building of to-day, but to illustrate our point consider the position of the market to-day in the matter of steel girders.

For the moment ignoring American girders which are prohibitive even if procurable, it may be said that steel girders and joists are, as far as New Zealand is concerned completely off the market.

Does that mean that given a building that has been originally designed mainly in steel frame, that it cannot be gone on with until steel work is again procurable at something approximating the pre-war figure? To assume that the stoppage of steel supplies has stopped building is surely taking a pretty narrow view of the capabilities of our Dominion architects, and yet we have heard men with business sense enough to know better, say that they are unable to go on with various building schemes until they can procure steel girders!

How many years ago is it that steel girders were put on the market for builders' use, and what did the designing architects employ before their advent? A little thought will surely show that these modern aids to building are not absolutely essential, for nobody will contend that magnificent buildings were not put up before the invention of steel girders. In a modified design where the use of steel is necessarily cut out, girder spans may have to be shortened, story posts may have to be increased, and various other sacrifices made, but after all who in abnormal times expects to build on exactly normal lines? The fact remains that before the use of steel, such buildings were put up, and it can be done again if, as we say, the architects and builders tackle the problem wholeheartedly.

We have taken steel as an example because it is most quoted as the present impediment to building schemes, but it is really only indicative of half a dozen building lines that are apparently proving bogeys to those who wish to build.

Looking at the building problem from as broad a viewpoint as possible the outstanding need would seem to be the encouragement of Dominion resources. Few countries in the world have such wealth of raw material to draw upon—practically nothing is denied us. Coal, iron and cement are found in enormous deposits often side by side to facilitate cheap working—while our timber for both indoor and outdoor work, and beauty of marking are world-famed, while if anything further were desired to make our position unique, we have it in the power running to waste in our rivers which is, as yet, practically undeveloped. We needed waking up to our possibilities as a producing country, and we say it with all due honour to those who have already taken the Dominion so far along certain commercial lines, but we contend that for every industry already safely established on business lines in New Zealand, there are other equal possibilities awaiting development.

New Industries for Queensland

"The Queensland Industrial Gazette" for May 10 mentions that many new products, the result of new capital ventures, have been placed on the market in Queensland, including, among others:—Brass buckles, harness and leather mountings, brass mounts for military equipment such as studs, &c., mild forged steel heel plates for boots, knitting needles, strong-room doors, engineers' turning lathes, dehorning instruments, and numerous veterinary implements.