

the pediments over windows on 1st and 2nd floors too thin and out of proportion. Section uninteresting.

Good points. The dining room is well placed and makes a nice room. Billiard room also good room with tables shown better than in former design. The details are neatly drawn but would have been better if more attention given to setting out the order. The drawings as a whole show care and the author should in time turn out some very creditable work.

Master Painters' Annual Conference

The Master Painters held their Annual Conference at Christchurch last month which was attended by delegates from all over New Zealand. It was decided that a New Zealand Federation of Master Painters' and Signwriters' Association of Employers be formed.

An address on Technical Education was given by Mr. J. B. Chetwin, the Auckland representative.

Mr. Chetwin said, in dealing with technical education, he would apply it particularly to the craft they represented. He was very doubtful if there was any craft in which there was such a wide scope for development, but the trade, as at present constituted, entirely failed to realise the position or that that scope ranged from wall-painting to decorative figure or landscape work. The craft afforded a scope for the ambitious apprentice, and he hoped the Federation would find ways and means not only for providing education from within, but would try to educate people outside to a greater appreciation of the work done by the decorator, and would lay down definite principles in order to build up the craft and put it on a footing equal to, if not better, than that of any other trade. It was the duty of the master painter to cultivate on definite principles the proper system on which the business should be worked, and to eradicate those things which were undesirable. They had art and technical schools, open to their apprentices, but these had had very little effect on the improvement of the craft. Those schools had no definite system laid out whereby a boy going through their syllabus would at least learn definite principles to make him a master of his craft, and also no definite system of education which would enable the same boy to get a commercial training suitable for his calling and make him a capable citizen. They had for some reason or other allowed their trade to fall down to the lowest trade status, and if they allowed that to go forth, they would only weaken their own trade structure. The old times when workmen knew how to do their work out of hand were gone, and now men must know not only how to do their work, but why it was done. His Association (the Auckland Master Painters) had realized the benefits of technical education, and had drawn up a comprehensive syllabus, which had been laid before Mr. Herdman Smith, the director of the local School of Art, and Mr. Smith was of opinion that it was equal to the best continental Decoration School Syllabus.

Mr. W. Nichol (Wellington) in thanking Mr. Chetwin for his address, spoke very earnestly on the

proper manner in which to treat the boys, and make the trade attractive. He dwelt on the need for raising the status of the trade.

Mr. Cooper (Timaru), said he did not wonder that there were boys wanted in the trade. They wheeled barrows and were covered with paint, and the trade was in no manner of means made inviting. Give the boy, he said, something attractive at the outset, and the boy would take an interest in the trade. A great deal of the old attraction had gone out of the trade. They no longer painted—they used coats of oil or varnish.

Mr. E. J. Bell (Christchurch) said he was glad to see that the syllabus drawn up by Mr. Chetwin included such subjects as English and book-keeping. The trade had sunk to a level in which its members were regarded as little better than labourers. The cure was the uplifting of the whole trade, and in the present uplifting of the nation he felt sure that that would occur. He asked why in this uplifting a member of the trade could not also be a gentleman and a valued citizen as well as a painter. That, he held, was the effect of a proper technical school training.

Mr. Birch said a great evil lay in the conservatism or jealousy of the older men, and he instanced a case in his own experience, a grainer and marbler absolutely refusing to allow anyone in the trade to watch him at his work. "I had to pay to learn this job," he said, "and if you want to learn it you must get four or five together and pay me a good round sum to get me to teach you."

After further discussion Mr. Chetwin was accorded a hearty vote of thanks for his address.

In the evening Mr. Collins (Wellington), gave an address on "Contracts." He thought that there should first be some clearly defined method of drawing up specifications. At present two men would read the same specifications and go away with two very different conceptions. This accounted for much of the difference between tenders. Tenderers had great difficulty in properly understanding the special customs of architects and differences arose. The Federation would indeed justify its existence if it did nothing more than draw up a model specification. He then touched on the "jobber," with whom business was verbal, to whom a price was given for £50 worth, while his interest was only nominal, and who thus got painters to tender—not to the principal, but to him (the jobber). He suggested that in this connexion a clause should be inserted in all jobbing contracts providing that only painters need apply. Painters had little trouble with the architects except in certain cases in which the Lien Act caused friction. He thought a compensatory measure might supplant the Lien Act. They should ask the architects to allow two days and two nights to be allowed to sub-contractors to study the specification. The sizes of glass should be clearly stated and adhered to, any alterations to be paid for. He also suggested that tenders should be paid 2½ per cent. on all jobs over £50.

The following day concluded the Conference and a paper was read by Mr. E. J. Bell on "Painting in regard to Public Health."