

Atelier of Architecture.

Thanks to the efforts of a limited band of enthusiasts, New Zealand architectural students get a fair amount of encouragement in developing their draughtsmanship and ideas. "Progress" claims to have done its share year in and year out, and we shall watch with satisfaction the near approach to the Dominion of that valuable little institute the Atelier. It has been established in Sydney, its inception and promotion being entirely due to the single-handed efforts of its promotor and patron, Mr. Gordon S. Keesing, A.I.A., late of the Atelier Prevot, New York, and Atelier Gromot, Paris. In the course of an article published in "The Salon," Mr. Keesing says: "Realising the disabilities under which the more ambitious architectural students of Sydney labour as regards their studies, I evolved a scheme by which the regular functions of an Atelier are combined with the most important elements of a University course. I drew up the curriculum as a result of criticism I heard whilst in England, of the work our students submitted for the R.I.B.A. examinations as well as from the observations of local architects, and in addition from my own experience—having had the experience of being an Australian trained draughtsman in competition with the Atelier and University trained men of New York." The quick success which has met Mr. Keesing's endeavours justifies the methods he is employing, and the improvement which has been accomplished, in a few months, in the work of some of the members of the Atelier is surprising. The novelty to the students of the new methods, the suddenness with which they are being thrust upon them, and the different conditions which obtain in Australia from those existing in Paris, New York, or even London, where the first Atelier started with Paris-trained men among its members—all threatened to be insurmountable. Quite the contrary has happened. Some of the members frequently do quick "design" problems which would gain a pass in the rather severe examination of l'Ecole des Beaux Arts. Some of their more finished work is above the average of that submitted at the bi-monthly exhibitions of the New York Beaux Arts Society. Then, altogether the Atelier has only been in existence for five months, the original members have had a good broad knowledge of the geography and history of architecture. The first year's syllabus contains the following items, which we reproduce for local guidance: A sheet of Classic details, carefully drawn, inked in and coloured; a sheet of measured work (for this as well as details of a feature, the whole building or, anyhow, sufficient to show the relation of the feature, must be included); a problem in design and planning in each important style, finished in pencil and colour, and a number of additional problems giving freedom in design, plan, and construction (this class of work has the additional objective of developing speedy draughtsmanship, and each problem has to be finished in about twelve hours); freehand sketches, lectures in history, design and allied subjects.

Compulsion to Win.

Freedom is so real a thing under the British Flag that people who do not enjoy its protection cannot understand our press, nor correctly interpret the signs of the times as they are made public in a free and easy fashion which even a war censorship has done little to modify. Wellington was recently the gathering point of a number of

people who hold extreme views on the subject of compulsion. A manifesto issued from this conference in the "Red Fed" style condemned compulsion root and branch. The Prime Minister, who must have had exceptional leisure that week, replied to the document, but he had really no serious need to do so, because no section of the community has done better than the working man in helping to win this war. The working classes have a grievance because they believe more could be done to relieve them from the soaring prices of commodities. We think so too, and it would be a tremendous help to recruiting if the long-expected Board of Trade began to busy itself. Exploitation has not been confined to food. Business men in most branches make exactly the same complaint as the manual worker, and suffer just as badly, except for the important difference that in the case of the latter, the margin between comfort and want is narrower. Now that the war-winning side of New Zealand's activities is well established, and things domestic are admittedly prosperous, it would be well for the National Government to give some attention to the internal problems raised as a result of the abnormal times. The Federation of Labour manifesto may be but the frothing of the Labour movement, but there is need for attending to some grievances, especially in view of the sacrifices all classes—not the manual worker alone—have to make for the Empire's sake.

Overflowing Coffers.

The latest bank returns show that the accumulation of capital in New Zealand goes on at a great pace. There is a widespread feeling of caution in the world of investment; and reacting unfavourably upon the would-be borrower is the high cost of materials wherewith to carry out new enterprises. Labour of the skilled type is scarce, and the building trade is feeling the pinch of its patriotism in the shortage of good men for the stay-at-home jobs. It is interesting to know, on the authority of the Bank of New Zealand chairman, Mr. Harold Beauchamp, that the colonial banks have been rendering financial service of inestimable value to the Allies by their extensive purchases of Treasury bills. These constitute a liquid security, as they can be taken up for terms of three, six or nine months, bearing five per cent even for the shortest term. This is where the millions to the credit of the New Zealand farmer really lie—not in the local coffers of the banks. It is a satisfaction to know that the money is not idle, but we should imagine that what the bankers can do so profitably, the real owners of the money could do with equal fidelity and monetary satisfaction. Investors have been a little too conservative in this Dominion, and the banks (which have encouraged them to the full in this cautious attitude) have reaped high reward in solid money and patriotic reputation. Now that the holders of our local hoards see how they have missed an opportunity, they may be more ready to take up local investments which will bring them good returns, and keep New Zealand's activities up to a satisfactory level. A section of the press headed by the "Lyttelton Times" has strenuously advocated a more self-reliant policy in respect to New Zealand's war expenditure. It certainly seems as if our farmers, if given facilities, would be only too willing to allow a part of their returns from Imperial meat purchases to remain out on loan to the British Government.