

New Zealand Marble

The Beginning of a Great Industry. Visit to the Kairuru Quarry and Tramline.

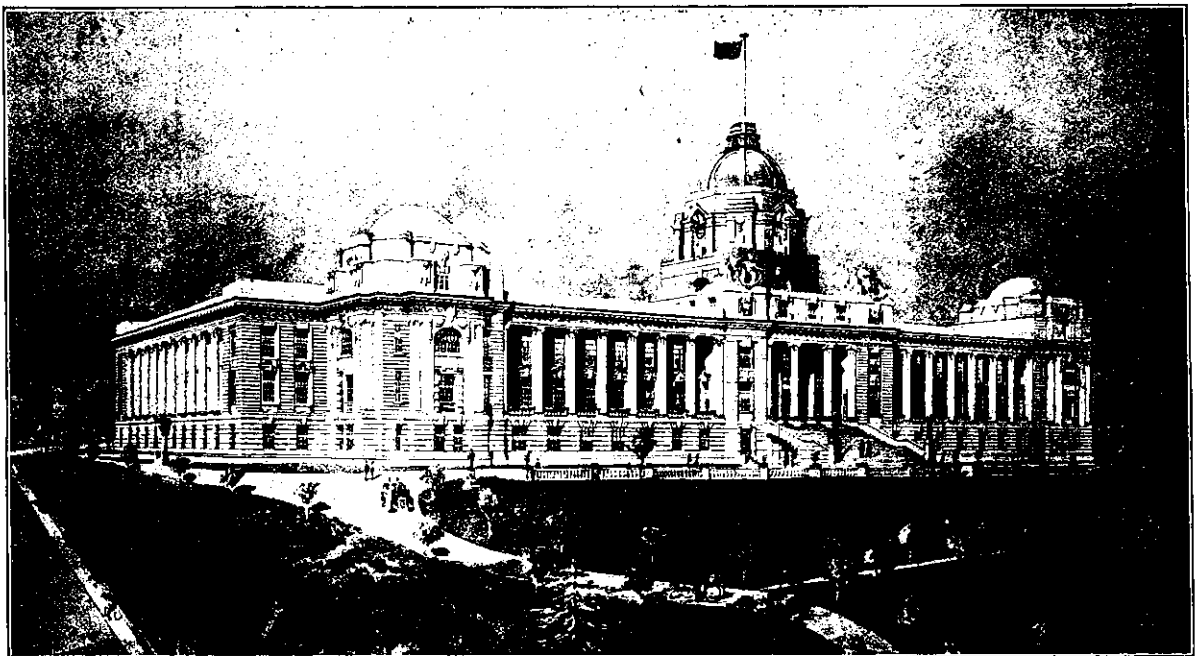
After ten years of failures and disappointments, New Zealand marble is being produced in ample quantities, and of splendid quality, from the Kairuru quarries, near Sandy Bay.

—Description and photographs by Chas. F. Wheeler.

New Zealand marble, of high quality, is just beginning to make its appearance as a building material. It exists in ample quantities, but the deposits are situated in country so difficult of access

ers should be proud—designed in their country and built of splendid materials obtained in the Dominion.

Behind the successful shipment last February of a cargo of fine sound marble lies a history of ten



PROPOSED NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENT BUILDING.

Architect: John Campbell, F.R.I.B.A.

Contractors: Hansford & Mills

The base, up to a height of 14 feet, is constructed of granite. Kairuru Marble is being used for the whole of the remainder.

that it was only after the expenditure of £5,000 upon a tramway rising from sea level to the head of a deep ravine 1,130 feet above sea level, and six and a half miles distant, that this valuable stone could be made available for practical purposes.

Rarely does a new material enjoy an introduction of so auspicious a nature as this Kairuru marble, as it is called. The finest national building in New Zealand, the new House of Parliament is being built of it from the first floor, the base being of Coromandel grey granite. Kairuru marble is white, with grey streaks, and its general effect is grey. Thus the two New Zealand stones will harmonize nicely, and the front elevation of the building, with its dome, lofty Ionic columns and spacious loggias, will be an architectural sight of which New Zealand-

years of failures. Settlers in the Sandy Bay district, and the mountainous region stretching back from the bay to the main road between Motueka and Takaka have always had faith in "the marble being there"—but the problem has been, not only to get it away, but to find a deposit of stone sufficiently free from faults to warrant the heavy expense of working.

One venture was started on sufficiently substantial lines to give great hopes of success but the hill-side quarry which this particular company worked with only fair results is now lying idle, and the rails are pulled up from the incline heading to the bottom of the valley. The marble-seekers have had to go another four miles inland to secure good sound stone, and they have now laid firm the foundations of a great industry.