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DEAR HOUSES AND BUILDERS' PROFITS.

Although the criticism of a Queensland builder regarding allegedly huge profits made on dwelling-house construction in New Zealand has been resented, the little outburst has done no harm. The replies to Mr. Ingoid's published remarks have, we feel sure, satisfied the community that New Zealand builders are not exploiting them in the matter of small dwellings. There has been ample evidence to the contrary. Take the experiments in "cheap" building conducted by the Labour Department and by some of the New Zealand municipalities. In no case has a reasonable-priced dwelling been built, even when a certain amount of mass production was undertaken. The Government has given up its housing department, apparently satisfied that private enterprise can do at least as well. The Public Works Department is supposed to have charge of any further State house building, but anyone who knows Departmental and Ministerial methods will have no doubt that this arrangement is just a way of covering up the unpleasant fact that there is to be no more State experimenting in house-building. The Public Works Department will continue to take an exclusive interest in the bigger things of the Dominion's development. As the Government still realises its responsibility for housing the community—especially as it is inviting emigrants to leave England for the Dominion—it is greatly improving the lending facilities of the State Advances Department so that finance will be more readily available for private building.

WHERE PUBLIC ENTERPRISE FAILED.

To revert to the visitor's criticism of builders' profits, we know there has been more cut-throat competition among builders for the small classes of construction work than in any other phase of the industry. Any good carpenter—and sometimes the indifferent one—thinks he can become a building contractor by the easy means of persuading someone to give him an order to build a wooden dwelling. The consequence is that much of this work is carried out by contractors at little more than bare wages as a recompense for their organising ability.

Certainly we need not look to the builder as a scape-goat for the existing housing difficulties. Our critic said not a word about the high cost of money in New Zealand. Had he thought of this point he would have been able to make some really effective comparisons between New Zealand and the Commonwealth, because money is appreciably cheaper over the Tasman Sea. Even our own Government finds it expedient to raise half a million of money in Australia for a loan renewal, because there was at least half per cent. advantage compared with the New Zealand market.

OUT-OF-DATE BY-LAWS.

Still another phase of the question which the critic in his very inadequate survey failed to recognise, is the stringent nature of the by-law requirements in nearly all the New Zealand cities and towns. We print in this issue an important series of suggestions for cheaper house-building which was made to our representative by the President of the Wellington Master Builders' Association, Mr. Mainland. In his very practical answer to the outside critic Mr. Mainland shows how quite a substantial sum could be saved on the average small wooden dwelling by making the by-laws a little less stringent, and without reaching the point of jerry-building, or endangering health. A few months ago we made a plea for municipal architects, who could revise the by-laws so as to bring them more into line with the conditions of to-day, when timber is scarce and dear, and houses at a premium. Though all these conditions prevail, there seems to be nobody associated with the administration of local bodies who will have courage enough to allow a working man to build a house of timber sufficiently good and strong to make a serviceable and safe job, but not the lavish and over-weighted construction now insisted upon by out-of-date by-laws.

POLITICS AND TOWN PLANNING.

The political situation is on a hair-trigger, and is, therefore, likely to change from day to day, but as it existed at the time of writing, there seemed a possibility that the Government in power would be

permitted to remain there under the toleration of opposition elements unable to combine to defeat them. It seems as if the Government might carry through the present Parliament if its legislation is drafted in such a way as not to arouse the active hostility of the Liberal section of the Opposition. A rather plain hint to that effect was given by the leader of the Opposition when, on the last day of the recent test session, he submitted a question to the Prime Minister suggesting that a number of measures, which he enumerated, might be at once put in hand with the law drafting office, so as to be ready for the "business" session to commence next June. Town planning was not in the list, although this subject has received the blessing of both Liberal and Reform Parties in turn. We suggest that town planning would be an eminently "safe" measure to be taken up by the threatened Government for the coming season, as it could be dealt with on non-party lines, and its practical idealism would appeal to the Labour section of the Opposition. The necessary information is in the possession of the Internal Affairs Department, a national conference of town planning advocates, with a strong representation of local body members having framed the lines of a measure representing a pure compromise—and a good workable one—between the various elements concerned in the matter. If the Hon. W. Downie Stewart took up this measure, we feel sure that it would have a good chance of passing through a Parliament where majorities are ephemeral, and it should certainly appeal to a Government now on the look-out for legislative material of a not too contentious character. For these reasons, we hope that the Institute of Architects will speedily make representations to the Minister of Internal Affairs, and that it will secure in this movement the co-operation of town planners who are not architects, and also the help of the Surveyors' Institute, whose members have shown an interest in the matter which is very welcome, because they would have a good deal to do in the practical carrying out of a town planning measure in New Zealand.

CHEAPER ACCIDENT INSURANCE.

The recent conference of the New Zealand Master Builders' Federation considered the important question of mutual insurance against accidents claims under the Workers Compensation Act, and it was decided not to venture on so big an undertaking at present, but to prepare for a more complete discussion at next conference, when it is hoped to place before the members the total amounts paid in premiums by members of the Federation, and the amounts received from the companies by way of claims paid. Possibly the Federation will even then balk at the bigger venture, and will utilise the figures, and its improving organisation, to group the business, thus placing itself in a position to secure a substantial discount. If it could appropriate to the members the amounts now paid in commissions by the companies, it would have a sufficient sum to pro-

perly remunerate its officers for the work involved, and possibly provide for the services of a couple of organisers. We are not merely guessing in putting forward these suggestions, for the plain evidence of their practicability is to be found in the statistics of accident insurance gathered by the Government and periodically published. There are 36 offices conducting accident insurance in New Zealand, and the great bulk of accident insurance, it will be admitted, is that due to the provisions of the Workers Compensation Act. During a period of five years—1917 till 1921 inclusive—the accident insurance offices, including the Government branch doing this business, collected in premiums over a million more than was paid out in claims, the actual figures being as follows:—

Premiums 1917-1921 ...	£2,400,180
Claims paid 1917-1921...	£1,368,364

This significant table shows that the companies had the large sum of £1,031,816 at their disposal after meeting claims. They are required to secure a good reserve, and their success is doing so in past years has been evident from the distributions of fully paid shares to fortunate shareholders from time to time, the reserves having accumulated beyond the point of actuarial necessity. Of course, the business is not conducted without a considerable expense, commissions being the main item. During the period under review, this expenditure amounted to £362,429, and we submit that the building industry paid a considerable proportion, and that it might easily appropriate to itself a very substantial return from the companies if it conducted its accident insurance on the grouping method and thus saved individual commissions.

Auckland War Memorial.

The winning design of the projected Memorial Museum, as prepared by Auckland architects for the open competition, which attracted designs from many different countries, has gained marked approval from numerous experts. The Mayor has received a letter from the Director of Education, Mr. R. Atkinson, under the London Architectural Association, who expresses pleasure at the success of old students of the Association's school, and congratulates Messrs. Draffin and Grierson upon their fine design. Mr. Atkinson adds that, generally speaking, New Zealand students make the best use of their time at the school, and are by far the best of the oversea students.

New South Wales Building By-laws.

The Institute of Architects in New South Wales has affirmed its approval of nine feet as being the minimum height for ceilings, and also that 720 cubic feet be the minimum cubic contents of any one room.

IS BUILDING TOO EXPENSIVE?

QUEENSLAND BUILDER CRITICISES NEW ZEALAND PRICES.

Some Builders' Replies—Where the Trouble Lies.

The assertion is made by Mr. A. E. Ingoid, Vice-President of the Queensland Suburban Master Builders' Association, that New Zealanders are paying too much for their wooden dwellings. A house to cost £1,150 in New Zealand he could undertake to erect in Queensland for £800. This criticism has naturally drawn replies from those in the industry in New Zealand, and one result has been to secure from the ex-President of the New Zealand Master Builders' Federation (Mr. H. F. Mainland) some practical suggestions for cutting the cost of small wooden houses.

That there is a "vicious circle" in the building trade in New Zealand, which is extorting undue profits from those building their own homes, was the opinion expressed to a newspaper interviewer by Mr. A. E. Ingoid, Vice-President of the Queensland Suburban Master Builders' Association, who is at present making a tour of the Dominion. When he was discussing the matter Mr. Ingoid plunged into estimates of the cost of building, and gave illustrations of the comparison between cost of material and labour charges in the two countries.

"I was looking at a plan last night of a building that was being erected in Wellington at a cost of £1150," he said. "In the meantime, while I have been here, I had already found out the prices of material and the wage rate, and I find, by the dimensions of the building, as I measured it, that it would only cost in Queensland £800, at a contract price, but, allowing for extra work, such as plastering, drainage and chimneys, which would make another £150 in this country, it would bring the total price of that particular building to £950, and give a fair margin of profit. You are paying £200 too much. I will quote you an example of a building I have in hand in Queensland, when I get home. It measures 36ft. by 36ft., and is to be completed with electric light, gas stove, metal ceilings, B grade timber throughout, painted inside and out, water laid on, and 1000-gallon tank, with usual enamel bath and sinks, on a block 42ft. frontage—price on completion £775, which allows me a margin of profit.

"I notice that timber here is up to 70s. and 80s. per 100; there are other lines, mostly used in your building here, ranging from 22s. upwards, and I claim that there is little difference in timber prices, comparing the two countries. Take the working conditions. Here the basic wage is 2s. 2½d. per hour—in many cases 2s. 6d. per hour is paid for good men. In Queensland, we are endeavouring to secure an award for 2s. 7½d. per hour; we pay 3s. to good men. As a builder, I say that you could make a fair margin of profit here, and save at least £200 on the cost of the building. There must be some method, being worked amongst the builders, whether

it is in the selling, the commission, or the agency, that is actually costing the extra price you have to pay for building a house.

"Last year I turned over 31 houses in the suburbs of Brisbane, and the number of men, over all, including myself, was 16. I have been around Wellington and other New Zealand towns. I have seen mere shells of buildings that fetched £900; some of the piles I could throw about with my hands. I have seen them up to £1500, and can assure you that we could turn these two classes out from £450 to £850 in Queensland. I have also seen four to five-roomed houses, for which the rent charged was from £2 to £3 per week, which would never bring more than 35s. at the outside in Queensland. I don't understand why the prices of building or the rents are so high in New Zealand; I am certain that there is a very big profit in both of them.

"I will anticipate the argument—I should have mentioned it before—that there is a difference in cartage costs here. There is not. You deliver at from 1s. to 2s. 6d. per 100, according to districts, and you carry big loads, up to 4000 feet, or three loads to a building. In Queensland we charge 7s. 6d. a load, and, worked out, the cost of cartage there is even more than in New Zealand. It has no bearing, therefore, on the excess profits charged in New Zealand."

CHEAPER DWELLINGS.

MASTER BUILDER'S SUGGESTIONS.

WHERE MONEY COULD BE SAVED.

When a representative of *Progress* brought the Queensland builder's criticisms of local builders under the notice of Mr. H. Mainland (ex-President of the New Zealand Builders' Federation), some very useful suggestions were made on the point of cheapening the cost of dwellings. Mr. Mainland was not disposed to take very seriously the visitor's very rough and ready survey of New Zealand conditions, although he incidentally disposed of several of the critic's points. What Mr. Mainland was

more concerned about was to show in what way something practical can be done to improve the situation.

"Are we making too much profit?" asked Mr. Mainland, having Mr. Ingoid's remarks in mind. "I think builders can clear themselves of any charge of exploitation of the public. We are all competing against one another, and we find that in our painters', plumbers', electricians', and blacklayers' work they are always within a few pounds of each other. And we have to include their prices in our quotations. So far as timber is concerned, we buy at list prices, and they govern this aspect of building costs. Hardware can be bought at the store, and everybody knows the prices. There is nobody at a disadvantage in buying these lines, and none of us could do much better than the other.

"As for labour, you can estimate this cost very closely. It is practically in the vicinity of 30 per cent. of the total cost of the house. You add this to the cost of the timber and hardware, both of which are out of our hands, and you can see for yourself if builders make any exorbitant profit. In a five-roomed house there are practically 10,000 feet of timber, costing, on the average—taking first-class and O.B.—£2 per 100 feet, which brings the cost of timber to £200. Excavation is usually a very important cost factor in a hilly city such as Wellington, and this may have been completely overlooked in our visitor's general comparison with Queensland conditions.

"The hilly nature of the district also adds to the cost of cartage. To take a load up to the hilly residential suburbs of Wellington costs at least 15s. for a three-horse dray. The most this load would comprise, if the timber is green, would be 600 feet. If dry, it might run to 1,000 feet. But our critic talks of carrying big loads up to 4,000 feet—'not in Wellington' is all I have to say."

SUGGESTED SAVINGS.

If the high cost is not in the profit, where is it to be found? was the natural query of the interviewer.

This drew some important suggestions from Mr. Mainland.

"A lot of timber could be cut down," was Mr. Mainland's reply. You might be able to leave off the sarking from the roof where iron is used, and thus you save the cost of about 2,000 feet of timber, plus the labour employed to cut it and put it into place. The cost of labour for sarking is 7s. 6d to 10s. per square, and the cost of the sarking is 30s. per 100 feet. In a roof of twenty squares, it would be possible, by a relaxation of the building by-laws, to save at least fifteen squares by putting the iron on the purlines. It would thus be possible to save up to £40 on the roof alone. You could use 3 x 2 purlines, and stretch your rafters to three feet apart, with complete safety.

"Coming to the framing, in certain cases I think we could do with two or three more inches on the centres, making 20in. instead of 18in. centres as now required by the by-laws. In ceiling joists, they could be spaced to suit the materials. If plaster boards are used, the joists could be spaced and battened to suit. You could hardly go past the by-laws with flooring, but the few suggestions I have made would lead to an appreciable cheapening of the cost of a moderate-sized dwelling in wood, if the by-laws were made easier. As for the stringent sanitary requirements, I do not know that we could relax, because the requirements have so direct a bearing on the health of the community, though the result is that all our plumbers' work is expensive. We are paying £5 per thousand for bricks, although our Queensland critic gets his for £3, and we must build chimneys of brick. So far as I can see, there is not much chance of saving on the plumbing, electricity, painting or brick-laying. It seems from recent tenders that painting is being done at a pretty low rate, and the competition is keen. People can rule out any idea that builders act in collusion, because anyone who handles tenders knows that competition is keen. Now and then, a builder submits a fairly high price in comparison with others, but this is usually due to the fact that he is very busy. If we could use red gum in New Zealand, as they can in Queensland, we could get heart timber for 17s. per 100, whereas the cost of heart timber in New Zealand is £3 10s.

"Our by-laws were framed when timber was cheap and plentiful. But to-day, while the same standards of size and strength are insisted upon, timber costs three to four times the price; therefore it is reasonable to suggest that we might make timber go a little further, especially as there need be no danger in revising the by-laws on these lines. It would be a wise plan if the architects co-operated with the builders in approaching the Wellington City Council with a request for reasonable revision of the building by-laws, with the object of cutting down the cost of dwellings. There need be no approach to Jerry-building if the framing of new by-laws is done by competent persons. And I might add that New Zealand builders are quite enterprising enough to efficiently carry on the building industry without outside assistance."

BY-LAW REQUIREMENTS AN OBSTACLE TO ECONOMY.

Mr. Alec. Campbell, another well-known Wellington builder, strongly corroborated Mr. Mainland's view that over-stringent building by-laws are partly responsible for high building costs. "If builders here are making £200 profit on a house, as Mr. Ingoid suggests," commented Mr. Campbell, "it is a wonder that Mr. Ingoid does not start business in Wellington, where, on his own figures, he would soon amass a fortune. If, as he says, he built 31 houses last year, and could do the same

here, he would be making over £6,000 a year, and I venture to say no builder in New Zealand is making anything like that at the present time. I happened to travel back to Sydney recently with Mr. J. Lindsay, a well-known Brisbane builder, and gathered from him that our by-laws, which Mr. Ingoid does not mention, are very different from those in force in Brisbane. Let him try building here, and he will see the difference.

“BY-LAWS THE HARDEST IN THE WORLD.”

“Our building by-laws are the hardest I have struck in the world, and that means that building here is more expensive to the owner than elsewhere.

“Then there are climatic conditions to be taken into consideration. I venture to say that the buildings in Brisbane do not have to stand the hard weather which had to be provided against here. Mr. Ingoid talks of metal ceilings. In Brisbane they use metal, tacked on to joists 4ft. apart. Why—it’s just like building a shed. That would not pass the City Council here. The Government, through the Labour Department, and the City Council have experimented in building houses, under the best of conditions, and without looking to make a profit. What those houses cost everyone knows.

“I had occasion some years ago to appear in a building case in Court in Wellington, when a union secretary stated that if a man could not make a reasonable profit building cottages by working eight hours a day, he should not be in the business. That union secretary later went into business as a builder, and in the course of another Court case in which I was a witness, stated that he and his partner could not make a decent profit at the game by working less than twelve hours a day. That man is still in Wellington, and will endorse what I say. That shows what builders are up against in the cost of building.”

Busy Wellington.

BOOM IN PROPERTY.

The present boom in city properties is made evident in more ways than one, says a Wellington paper. Increased building activity, the demand for shop frontages, and the extremely busy times experienced by land and estate agents are signs of the times, and if it were possible to go deeply into the position an interesting story might be told.

Undoubtedly the most interesting feature is the almost unprecedented success of the speculator. Within the past few months some remarkable deals have been brought off, in some cases resulting in the fortunate purchaser-seller considerably adding to his bank balance. One of the most rapid and fruitful transactions occurred in connection with a Lambton Quay property. This property had a frontage of 13ft., and the section is by no means a large one. Along came a prospective purchaser, and a deal resulted, involving approximately £8000, and

only five weeks later the speculator resold for over £12,000. A prominent land and estate agent said that that was only one example of what was going on at the present time.

As for house rents, these were still going up—a case of supply and demand. There were plenty of houses for sale, and in most cases the owners were quite prepared to hold on, pending the arrival of the most suitable purchaser. In the central portions of the city houses were often bought for large sums, and immediately pulled down to make room for shops and business premises. That was the general trend in what might be described as non-residential parts of the city. This, of course, was brought about by the fact that land in the city proper was at an absolute minimum, and the growth of the business portion of the city would have to take place from within. Another point emphasised was that building activity was to a certain extent retarded by the uncertain cost of building. This was responsible for a tendency to purchase property already built upon.

With regard to shops, the demand was great, and rents had an upward tendency.

New Theatre for Auckland.

A new theatre, to be called the Colosseum, is shortly to be erected in Queen Street, Auckland, on the site adjoining that of the Auckland Savings Bank. The demolition of the block of shops now standing on the site has commenced, and at the back of the area the work of excavating the foundations is already in hand. It is hoped to have the building constructed by Christmas. The Colosseum is being built for an Auckland company at a cost exceeding £150,000, and it will have seating accommodation for some 2000 people. It is being so constructed that it can be utilised either for dramatic or for cinematographic entertainments, states the “New Zealand Herald.” The new theatre will have a frontage of 98ft. to Queen Street, and will run back to Lorne Street.

Duty on Compo Board.

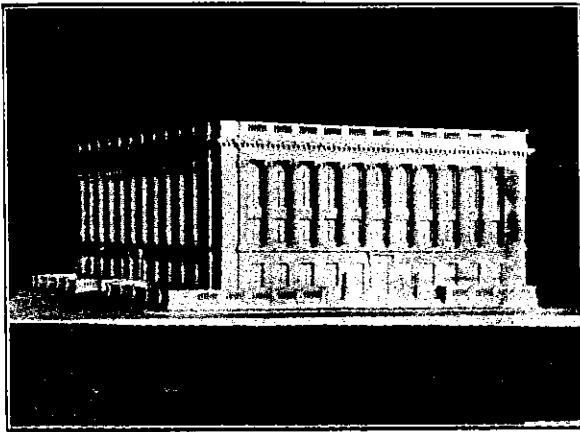
A recent Order-in-Council states that the duty on “compo” board, which consists of timber with a layer of paper-pulp, strawboard, paper or similar material, cemented thereto on one or both sides, is to be charged at the rate of four shillings per hundred superficial feet, and, in addition, is liable to a primage duty of 1 per cent. *ad valorem*. This material, which is used as a substitute for dressed timber, is not specifically mentioned in the tariff.

Personal.

Mr. Basil B. Hooper, A.R.I.B.A., of Dunedin, is, we understand, removing to Auckland, to join in partnership with Mr. J. W. Rough, A.R.I.B.A., of 37 H.M. Arcade, Queen Street.

The New Chamber of Commerce Building at Washington.

The building illustrated herewith was designed by Mr. Cass Gilbert, architect, New York, who designed the Treasury Annex building in the same city. The building will be of the classic type prevalent in all the Government buildings erected in Washington, since the days of Thomas Jefferson. It will have a frontage of 158 feet, and a depth of 149 feet, and in conformance with the ideas of the Fine Arts Commission, will preserve a certain uniformity with other buildings on Lafayette Square, on the south side of which is located the White House. The site chosen, it may be of interest to note, included the old home place of Daniel Webster, which has been razed, the corner stone for the new building having been laid, with appropriate ceremonies, during the tenth annual meeting of the Chamber, and the work of erection is already in progress.



The New Home of the Chamber of Commerce, Washington.

It is proposed to complete the building, for its full length, up to the balustrade on the fourth story, provision being made in the plans and construction for the addition of a fifth or even a sixth story, should this, at a future period, prove necessary.

At the back of the site there will be an artistically designed auditorium, calculated to hold about 850 people. It will extend for three stories of the main building, having a flat roof, and will be built strong enough to carry additional stories, should they be needed.

An interior court or *patio*, 60 x 60 feet, will be an attractive feature of the building, and from the handsome entrance on H. Street, there will be a clear view through to the auditorium in the rear. On each side of the court, leading from the main building to the auditorium, there will be covered passages. On the east side there will be a wide alley for carriages and motors which will have exit facilities to both I and H Streets.

On the ground floor, immediately inside the entrance, there will be a large hall, suitable for the display of tablets, etc., a library, conference room, small auditorium and reception room with entrance from the wide alley and easy access to the auditorium.

The second, third and fourth floors will accommodate the offices to be occupied by the present headquarters force of about 160 persons and such additions as may later be found necessary.

No offices in the building will be rented, it being the intention of the Chamber to occupy the entire structure. It is not, however, intended that it shall be used exclusively for the business of the organization, but that it shall be, in a broader sense, a headquarters for American business, a rallying place at which the various interests may find accommodation for consultations, etc. The large auditorium will be held at the disposal of affiliated member organizations, for meetings they may hold in Washington, while the various committee rooms and conference rooms will be at the service of members when not in use for headquarters purposes. The room in which the board of directors will hold their meetings, will be located on the top floor, on the east side, and will extend considerably above the level of the roof in other parts of the building.

Bungalow Bungling.

When Edwin and Maud moved into their wooden bungalow, Edwin said: "This place has been badly neglected. Look at all that lovely wisteria lying flat on the veranda! I will nail it up."

He did so. Some people would have employed a man to do it, but not Edwin; he was full of vim and energy. He had used a pound and a half of nails and one of his wife's golfing skirts cut into strips before the job was finished. Then Maud called him to hang up the pictures.

"Look!" he exclaimed. "There are iron spikes sticking out all over the wall. The man who lived here before must have had hundreds of pictures. Impossible to pull them out—I must hammer them in."

Edwin proceeded to hammer them in vigorously, and presently his wife called out from the garden, "Edwin, the wisteria has fallen down again!"

To remove stains from glass, use three parts of American potash and one part unslaked lime. Lay on with a stick and let remain for some time.

* * *

Common washing soda dissolved in water will remove paint or tar from glass if put on thick and allowed to soak for 30 minutes.

* * *

Paint stains that are dry may be removed from cotton and woollen goods with chloroform; first cover the spots with olive oil or butter.

NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF MASTER BUILDERS.

PROCEEDINGS OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

Special Report for "N.Z. Building Progress."

The annual meeting of the New Zealand Federation of Master Builders' and Contractors' Industrial Association of Employers was opened in Dunedin on February 21st, Mr. H. Mainland (President), of Wellington, being in the chair. The delegates also present were: Messrs. M. R. Souster and R. J. Morris (Auckland); W. H. Winsor, R. C. Nightingale, and W. Williamson (Canterbury); J. McCormack, Geo. Clark, and D. O'Connell (Dunedin); J. S. McKay, of Invercargill (Gisborne); H. H. Campbell (Hawke's Bay); W. H. Naylor, of Dunedin (Manawatu); H. D. Preston and W. Andrews (Southland); Geo. Simpson, of Dunedin (Taranaki); E. Walpole (Wanganui); A. H. Mildenhall and A. M. Wilson (Wellington); together with Mr. W. A. Grenfell (secretary of the Federation), and Mr. A. S. Cookson, secretary of the Dunedin Builders' Association).

OFFICIAL WELCOME.

Mr. W. Begg (Deputy-Mayor of Dunedin) was introduced to the Conference by Mr. J. McCormack, President of the Dunedin Builders' Association. Mr. Begg, who apologised for the unavoidable absence of the Mayor, extended a very hearty welcome to the delegates and remarked that several of the items on the order paper were of interest to himself. The Dunedin City Council had undertaken its own insurance, and he considered it one of the best strokes of business they had ever done. He would be glad to give the Conference any information desired as to the results of the Dunedin experience in this direction. As for the shortage of houses, it was evident that the Government's efforts to deal with the question had not been a success, and he would be glad if the Conference could put forward something which would result in effectively coping with this serious problem. Tradesmen were said to be short in numbers, and he suggested that builders might improve the position by making the conditions more attractive to boys who entered the industry.

Mr. Mainland, in acknowledging the welcome, declared that Dunedin's progress, civic and otherwise, had given a lead to the rest of the Dominion. He remembered the old conditions in the city, which his father had helped to build. The difficulties had been great, but they had been surmounted with striking effect. Dunedin had given attention to afforestation, a subject which the late Mr. S. I. Clark, a member of the Federation, had devoted a

great deal of time and attention to, and the Federation would be glad to note what had been done in this respect in Dunedin. The trouble in regard to dwellings was world-wide. Wellington had been unfortunate in its attempts to solve the difficulty, as the houses erected to meet the emergency had cost more than they should have cost. He trusted that Conference would give the matter attention, and submit some proposals which would be of value to the community. The apprentice question was a hardy annual. They had tried to encourage the boys by granting special privileges and higher wages, but results had been disappointing. Finally, the President drew attention to the presence at the Conference of Messrs. Wall and Yates, two Sydney visitors who were prominent in the building industry there, and assured them that they were warmly welcomed. New South Wales builders had always welcomed New Zealanders who went to that State, and the New Zealand builders were glad of an opportunity to reciprocate.

Mr. Wall, in acknowledging the welcome, said he would be glad to give the Conference particulars of what was being done to encourage apprentices in his State. Sacrifice was needed by the builders, and unless there was sacrifice there would be no apprentices. The matter was, however, of such great national importance that the Government should come into the question and assist to encourage a greater number of youths to take up skilled occupations. Sydney had found it imperative to take up an insurance scheme, and he commended this subject to New Zealand builders as one of the greatest importance. Other matters worthy of attention were the procuring of schedules of quantities, and the securing of equitable conditions of contract. He pointed out in regard to the housing shortage that an era of reinforced concrete had set in, and that unskilled labour entered largely into this form of construction.

Mr. Yeats also responded to the speeches of welcome.

CONDOLENCE.

Before proceeding to business, the President referred sympathetically to the death of Messrs. S. I. Clark (Auckland), Wm. Pryor (Wellington), Wm. Riddell (Invercargill), and K. Beecham (Napier), all of whom had rendered value service to the Federation. On his motion, a resolution of sympathy with the deceaseds' relatives was carried in silence, members standing as a mark of respect.

ANNUAL REPORT.

The annual report by the Executive on the work of the Federation stated that the Executive believes members will realise that it is amply apparent the maintenance of the organisation is essential and that the work of the Executive has been of material and lasting benefit to the trade. With regard to the experience of the past year and the prospects of the trade, it is recognised that the Dominion has not escaped any more than other countries from the after effects of the Great War. The primary products of the Dominion, on which its general prosperity depends, have not been yielding the same returns as previously, and the capital shortage is being felt by all classes of trades, by builders no less than others. But your Executive believes the worst is over and that in the near future the country will be blessed with a renewal of the prosperous times that were enjoyed prior to the war. Everything points to a speedy revival of trade generally, and already there are many signs that building operations will be actively carried on and there will be plenty of work for all engaged in the trade.

REGISTRATION OF BUILDERS.

This question has been under consideration for a number of years, and Ministers of the Crown, particularly the Hon. A. L. (now Judge) Herdman and the Hon. Downie Stewart, have been consulted and their assistance sought. During the past year the Hon. Downie Stewart gave your Executive a long interview and discussed the matter fully. While recognising that on the face of matters master builders might be as much entitled to registration as plumbers or those engaged in other callings, he feared there was no prospect of Parliament adopting a measure that would give master builders the sole right to carry out building operations. He could not see his way to moving in the direction of preparing a measure providing for registration, but would give fullest consideration to any information or proposals this Federation could supply on the subject. As he saw the matter he could not hold out much hope of the Ministry adopting such a measure as that suggested, but the matter would be fully gone into when specific proposals were submitted.

The Auckland master builders have devoted some thought and consideration to this subject, and have forwarded a draft Bill for discussion. Copies of this Bill have been made and will be supplied to members in order that the subject may receive every consideration at this Conference.

Your Executive has endeavoured to find a solution of the problem that would be reasonable and satisfactory, but without success, but hopes Conference will view the subject from all standpoints and will reach a satisfactory conclusion.

CARPENTERS' AWARDS.

It will be remembered that the present awards were made on the terms and conditions decided upon by the Arbitration Court at Auckland, after hearing

the representative of the workers and your secretary. Those awards have expired, and the national secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners has approached the Executive to ascertain if this present Conference would be willing to discuss the terms of a new award with their representatives. Your Executive has replied that it could not be reasonably expected the master builders would be willing to meet the workers in conference without having first had an opportunity of considering their claims and that the holding of a preliminary conference would not avoid the necessity for holding Conciliation Council sittings. With this latter view the secretary practically agreed and it was understood he would forward copies of the workers' new claims for consideration by Conference.

When the first general order of the Court reducing wages was made the Carpenters' and Joiners' Union made application to the Court for exemption from its operation on the grounds that they were required to purchase tools, there being an increase rather than a reduction in the price of tools. The application when brought before the Court at both Auckland and Dunedin sittings was refused.

SCAFFOLDING AND EXCAVATION ACT.

This measure was introduced in Parliament by the Minister of Labour, and contains a number of new provisions which call for close attention and observance by the trade. In connection with the appointment of inspectors, it is proposed by Government to establish a Board for the purpose of examining applicants for the position. Such Board will include a Government officer, and one representative each of employers and workers interested in the administration of the Act. In this connection the trades interested are being asked by Government to nominate a representative on the Board, and it is advisable that Conference should move in this matter by suggesting to the master plumbers and master painters the appointment of a suitable representative.

The report also referred to other changes in the law, including a number of amendments to the Workers' Compensation Act which materially increase the responsibilities of employers.

Referring to the reductions in wages ordered by the Arbitration Court, the report stated: It is believed that employers generally have given effect to the reductions thus authorised, it being recognised that the making of such reductions must eventually bring about a corresponding reduction in prices.

AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY CONTRACT.

On receipt of information that the conditions of contract provided by the architects in connection with this job were at great variance with the general conditions, your Executive took steps to ensure that all tenders lodged were made subject to the 1910 conditions. The master builders of Sydney and Melbourne were warned by cable of the unsatisfactory conditions. Your Executive was most gratified

to learn that all tenders were submitted upon the terms advised by it, and that the contract was ultimately given to and signed under the general conditions by a well-known firm that loyally adopted the Executive's advice. The President of the Institute of Architects saw fit to adversely criticise in the Press the action of the Executive in this matter. Although generally objecting to taking part in newspaper controversy, it was felt the remarks applied to this Federation could not be allowed to remain unchallenged, and a vigorous reply was made, putting the facts fairly before the public.

BOARD OF TRADE TIMBER COMMITTEE.

Your Executive desires to express very warm appreciation of the services rendered to the trade by the late Mr. S. I. Clarke and Mr. W. H. Bennett as members of the above-named committee. They were called upon to attend long sittings, and although a hopeless minority, it is believed their presence resulted in the interests of master builders being kept prominently before the committee. In May last Mr. Bennett reported to the Executive that he had been informed that Government had decided to cease endeavouring to control prices, and the holding of a timber merchant's licence is no longer necessary.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Mr. Mainland, in moving the adoption of the report and balance-sheet, said:—I think it only proper to make a few remarks on the year's work, and on the probable future activities of the Federation. The first and most necessary step is to persistently impress upon master builders the importance of the trade and the imperative necessity for them to combine for mutual protection and the advancement of their interests. Next in importance is perhaps the question of the form of conditions for general use by the trade in the carrying out of building contracts. As members are aware, there are differences of opinion between this Federation and the Institute of Architects on this important matter. If your Executive had wavered or agreed on the radical changes suggested by the architects, the standing of the trade would have been impaired, the rights of builders seriously curtailed, and the good name of this Federation materially and permanently discredited. The present prospects are that the differences will be ultimately amicably settled, and there seems possible a better understanding between our two organisations whose interests are inter-dependent and their possible co-operation in connection with the carrying out of undertakings by public bodies for the improvement and beautifying of local surroundings.

If practical and professional citizens are prepared to voluntarily give advice to civic authorities with regard to important undertakings, it is advisable and desirable that citizens who are best suited for consultation should be invited to co-operate and advise in these matters.

With regard to the present method of securing business and employment, it is unfortunate that under the present system builder is continually hustling and bustling in feverish competition with fellow-builder. By closer amalgamation and co-operation it is believed the business and standing of those engaged in the building trade may be vastly improved. The result of the co-operation of all concerned in the building trade would mean the creation of a Federation that would advance the interests of all concerned, tend to reduce unemployment, eliminate undue competition, and give the trade a greatly improved standing in the Dominion.

With regard to building supplies, have members recognised the necessity of continual activity in this direction? The duty of the building fraternity is to control more and more the supplies by business methods that would ensure to the Federation a membership larger, and I may say, probably more enthusiastic, than at present, as the advantages would be very much greater and the gains considerable. There are opportunities in this country that lend themselves much more to the practical man than to the professional or ordinary speculator. Most of the positions in companies that are controlling our supplies are held by men who are probably little interested in the trade we represent, but have only the interest of the accumulation of the shekels. This certainly is a necessary element in business, but it is not money only which is required to strengthen the position of a Federation where a more equitable and wider spread of the gains is likely to tend to solidarity, and create a greater interest in the knowledge that the Federation could build up a fund to control the supplies sufficiently to ensure to every builder launching out, undoubted success, and to the builder who is independent, an additional safeguard and security. The securing of this control is not impossible, and would be quite legitimate, because the interests of the public, our clients, would certainly be bettered by the Federation's undoubted claims of practical knowledge of the requirements. Now, do not misunderstand me! The Federation will require to broaden its constitution before such a scheme could develop, and affiliations would require to be made with the seekers of shekels, and we should even require the help of our employees.

Let us take the housing question. Is there a body more entitled by experience, and by its special training more fitted to take action in this matter of housing? We know by experience that our books must balance, and that if they do not show a profit, we must alter our methods of business. This principal must be adopted in connection with the erection of homes for the people. Houses should be provided at a cost that will enable the worker to pay instalments out of his earnings and ultimately to become the owner. There is a field for the closer combination of all engaged in the trade, and if a scheme of co-operation embracing employees were inaugurated they would greatly benefit, and many questions troubling us to-day

would vanish into thin air. We would find that the necessity of the times had guided us to efficiency, which would benefit the individual, while illustrating to the Dominion that economy and thoroughness result from unity. One could enlarge on the subject I have touched on. I feel that to secure the best results we have to strike out and develop the great opportunities and resources lying around us, which nobody is more entitled to administer than ourselves. In using the word "ourselves," you will readily understand that I use it in a wide sense, and that it is intended to cover a great many interests that, though not in our Federation, would be better under our leadership.

The report and balance-sheet were adopted unanimously, after an interesting discussion, during the course of which the Executive was congratulated on the good work accomplished during an exceptionally difficult year. Reference was made to the dangerous nature of the power now given to the Arbitration Court to ante-date an award, as this would commit employers to a liability for which they could not receive any return. Mr. Grenfell explained that the power possessed by the Court to make awards retrospective would not operate unless the employers agreed as to the date on which the award should come into operation. He therefore urged employers not to agree in Conciliation Council as to a date.

BURDENS ON THE INDUSTRY.

Mr. Nightingale (Canterbury) moved: "That the Executive be requested to oppose all legislation which will tend to unnecessarily increase the cost of building or require the appointment of more inspectors."

The mover explained that the motion aimed particularly at the appointment of more inspectors, for there were too many already.

Mr. Winsor said that although there had been a regrettable accident, this did not justify a large increase in the number of inspectors.

Mr. McCormack, who agreed with other speakers as to the great expense of scaffolding required under the new Act, moved as an amendment: "That the matter be left in the hands of the incoming Executive and Parliamentary Committee, and that it be a direction to the Executive that strong opposition be made to legislation that will increase the cost of building or necessitate the appointment of additional inspectors."

The amendment was carried.

CONSTITUTION OF ARBITRATION COURT.

Mr. Winsor (Christchurch) moved: "That the Parliamentary Committee be asked to inquire into the possibility of altering the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act so as to provide that an assessor from each side, representing the industry concerned in each trade dispute shall be selected by the parties, and be associated with the Judge in place

of two permanent Associates." Replying to the point raised by Mr. Grenfell that there is provision in the Act for appointment of experts, Mr. Winsor said this did not go far enough. At present, permanent officials were the final arbiters, but experts with special knowledge of the industry should be given power to make the final decision.

Mr. Campbell thought the important point was to place the expert evidence before the Court.

Other speakers opposed the proposal, considering that present procedure gave opportunity for presentation of special matters affecting any industry.

The motion was lost.

REGISTRATION OF BUILDERS.

Auckland: "That Conference instruct the Federation Executive to proceed at once in the matter of placing the proposed Registration of Builders Bill before the first session of Parliament."

Mr. Souster, in moving this remit, said that there were frequent inquiries as to why nothing had been done in this matter. There was a strong tendency in Auckland to sub-let work, and he agreed with a statement of Mr. Williamson that sub-contractors overran the trade. If builders were registered, they would have sole control. Their standing would be better and would be in line with architects, plumbers, and others who had secured registration. He hoped that the Executive would approach Parliament next session to secure the registration of builders.

Mr. Morris seconded.

Mr. Mainland, in supporting the remit, said that the building trade was of importance, and was not second even to the architectural profession.

The motion was carried.

TENDERING SYSTEM.

Southland: "That the Conference consider the system of tendering as adopted by the Southland Builders' Association with a view to this becoming general throughout the Dominion."

After a discussion of the Southland method, and conditions in other centres, an amendment was moved by Mr. McCormack: "That this Conference heartily compliments the Southland Association upon its operations, but cannot recommend its policy for general adoption by other centres."

The amendment was agreed to.

AFFORESTATION.

At the evening sitting of the Conference, Mr. Winsor (Christchurch) brought up the question of afforestation, which had been the subject of a motion at last year's Conference. He suggested that other parts of New Zealand should do their share in growing hard timber, in the same way as was done in Canterbury and Otago. There was an urgent necessity to follow the lead of these districts, as soft timbers only were being planted in other parts. It had been pointed out by Mr. Wall that we had reached the age of concrete, therefore, added Mr. Winsor, it became all the more important that

hard timbers should be grown for finishing, while the soft timbers were available for boxing. He moved: "That the Executive give effect to the resolutions of last Conference."

Mr. Nightingale seconded.

Mr. Campbell remarked that more attention should be given to the planting of native timbers, especially kauri and larch—very useful timbers. He suggested that this matter be brought before the notice of the Government.

The chairman said he had found *pinus insignis* quite satisfactory for boxing, and it would be better to conserve red pine by using *pinus insignis* for boxing. Larch, he had noticed, was very largely planted by the State Forest Department in the Rotorua district. He promised that the Executive would do everything possible to further the views of the members.

Mr. Grenfell read a memorandum detailing the afforestation operations of the Dunedin City Council.

The motion was carried.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE.

Mr. Souster (Auckland) moved: "That Conference take steps to institute a Dominion accident insurance scheme for builders only."

The mover stated that the Auckland Association had considered forming an accident fund of its own, but had come to the conclusion that the better plan was to make it a national fund of greater strength. He felt sure that if the Federation took it up, there would be a great reduction in premiums.

Mr. Walpole asked what amount should be in hand before the fund commenced to operate?

Mr. Winsor suggested that £25,000 would have to be raised. He was against the proposal, preferring to continue to support the insurance companies than to launch out and incur unknown liabilities. Christchurch had had an unfortunate experience, and it was hardly likely that they would adopt a new scheme.

Mr. Grenfell remarked that in some respects he was in agreement with the last speaker. Builders derived benefits through dealing with insurance companies. Among other things, in cutting away from the companies, it would mean that builders could not reinsure, and they would be thrown on their own resources. Expert management was needed, and experts were difficult to obtain. He outlined the law relating to mutual insurance associations, pointing out that if builders wished to insure mutually against accident, special legislation would be required. Last year, the Dunedin City Corporation, after paying all claims, had a surplus of £1,014. The greatest obstacle would be the difficulty of securing the general support of the whole body of builders.

Mr. Winsor quoted from *Progress* regarding the profits and expenses of insurance companies operating in New Zealand.

Mr. Preston suggested that the whole effect of the discussion came back to the old question of the necessity of organisation before attempting to raise so large a sum as £25,000 to inaugurate a scheme of such magnitude.

Mr. Nightingale stated that it had been found impossible in Christchurch to get the unanimous support of builders. In endeavouring to carry out the scheme, they would be fighting one of the strongest organisations in the world. It would be useless going on with the proposal unless they could obtain the guaranteed co-operation of all builders. He suggested that the Association might establish a sinking fund to provide for accident only.

Mr. Mackay suggested that as builders, they should stick to their own work, and leave insurance alone. In any case, such a scheme would throw too much work on the secretary.

Mr. Williamson wondered whether it would be possible to make arrangements with the new company about to start in New Zealand. He estimated that the premiums paid by builders in New Zealand for accident insurance alone amounted to between £25,000 and £30,000. He believed that with this large amount of business to offer, it would be wise to approach the new company with a request for special terms.

The chairman pointed out that the question of guarantee came in, and there was also the aspect that many builders had interests in other insurance companies.

Mr. McCormack stated that although he had originally been in favour of mutual insurance, he had changed his mind, as he had come to the conclusion that the undertaking was too big. Members would have to consider fire insurance, because if they took accident insurance from the companies, the fire insurance would suffer and they might be obliged to take both classes of risk.

Mr. Souster remarked that Auckland had achieved its object by securing so good a discussion of the subject. He asked permission to withdraw the remit. This having been granted, Mr. Souster moved: "That the matter of accident insurance be deferred for consideration until next Conference, and that, in the meantime, Association Secretaries be asked to ascertain the amount of premiums paid and claims received."

Mr. O'Connell seconded.

The motion was adopted.

COMPULSORY TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Christchurch: "That in the opinion of this Federation the age of compulsory education should not be extended beyond the age of 15 years."

Mr. Winsor, in moving the remit, referred to the report of the Conference of Technical School Managers recommending that part time continuation education should be made compulsory up to the age of 17 years. In Christchurch they wished to get apprentices through by 21 years of age.

Mr. Nightingale, who seconded, remarked that at 17 a boy was unwilling to work for a small wage, and the present arrangements left a loophole for the boy to get out of the apprenticeship at an early stage.

Mr. McCormack declared that while education was a fine thing, they were trying to cram too much into the boys. A high school boy at the age of 17 was too old to learn a trade, and the proposal to increase the school age would make it still more difficult to secure apprentices. In past years, boys who started young made better tradesmen, but the present-day boy was dissatisfied with the wages.

Mr. Mildenhall supported the motion, but suggested that there should be an addition that if a boy wished to learn a trade, he should be permitted to leave school at the age of 15.

Mr. Grenfell said that the Factory Act provided for the latter point.

Mr. Cookson said that the technical school authorities wished boys to secure time off during working hours, so that they could attend the technical school.

Mr. Walpole asked what was the attitude of allied trades in regard to this point?

The Chairman: The plumbers will not allow this, nor will the builders at present.

The motion was carried.

FEDERATION EXECUTIVE.

Mr. Morris (Auckland) moved: "That the constitution of the Federation Executive consist of one member from each centre, to be called together when necessary, and at least once in every three months, with three Wellington members to be appointed as a Vigilance and Parliamentary Committee."

The mover considered that this would be a forward step, which would keep associations in closer personal touch with the Executive.

Mr. Souster seconded.

Mr. McCormack opposed the motion. He thought the Executive had done excellent work, and it kept associations fully informed of what was being done on their behalf. If the change was made, who would pay the expenses?

Mr. Simpson thought the remit quite unnecessary, and he did not think their Wellington friends would thank them if it was carried. A few men were better able to carry out the work than a large number, because business was hampered by a crowd.

Mr. O'Connell agreed with the last speakers, adding that the work was very well done at present.

Mr. Andrews declared that the Executive deserved a pat on the back, and he was against any change.

Several other speakers spoke against the motion, and Mr. Morris, in reply, said that since sitting at Conference he had become more than satisfied at the way in which the Executive had fulfilled its duty. He was, however, obliged to carry out instructions in moving the remit.

The motion was lost.

ORGANISATION OF THE INDUSTRY.

Remits from Southland and Auckland regarding organisation were taken together:—Southland: "That the time has arrived when the building trade in New Zealand should be more thoroughly organised." Auckland: "That the Federation Executive proceed at once with the appointment of a Dominion organiser."

A very full discussion of the matter followed, delegates giving detailed information regarding the position in their own districts. It was mentioned that the probable cost of a Dominion organising movement would be about £2,000.

Mr. Walpole, who expressed the opinion that the Federation was not yet ready for the larger scheme, moved as an amendment: "That the question of appointing a Dominion organiser be left in abeyance; that Canterbury be asked to reorganise Timaru, and that Wellington, Wanganui and Auckland be asked to do the same for Masterton, Palmerston North and Hamilton respectively, any expense to be borne by the Federation if necessary."

Mr. Campbell seconded.

The amendment was adopted, and then carried as the substantive motion.

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE.

Mr. Campbell (Hawke's Bay) moved: "That all future Conferences be held in a more central town, Wellington for preference." The mover remarked that the holding of Conferences in distant part of the Dominion resulted in too great an expense to delegates.

Mr. Andrews, in seconding, pointed out that all the time and money of the Auckland delegates had been expended in coming to Dunedin for only two days' work.

Opposition to this motion was expressed by Messrs. Simpson and Winsor, the latter suggesting that it would be unfair to throw on Wellington the onus for hospitality on every occasion. It was an education in itself to meet at the different centres.

Mr. Grenfell pointed out that the expense of travelling was lessened to the distant Associations if the place of meeting is changed from time to time.

The motion was lost.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd.

QUANTITY SURVEYING.

The Conference was resumed on the morning of Thursday, February 22nd, when Mr. Morris moved: "That the Conference discuss the question of getting a clause in the general conditions of contract that the quantities should be supplied on all contracts over £1,000."

Mr. Souster seconded.

Mr. O'Connell said that in Dunedin they were fortunate in having Mr. George to work out quantities.

Mr. Williamson stated that there were plenty of good quantity surveyors, and he believed in letting things remain as at present.

Mr. McCormack thought the present system quite satisfactory, and he did not favour architects supplying quantities. He had had a conversation with Mr. Wall, who agreed with him. The better plan would be for each centre to provide its own quantity surveyor. He did not approve of a proposal that the quantities should be scaled, and only opened in the presence of the architect and builder.

Mr. Nightingale considered that if a builder could not take off the quantities, he could not know his trade. The proposal was too revolutionary, and he was against it.

Mr. Campbell remarked that if the builder had gone carefully through his quantities, he knew what he required. The proposal was all right if one could rely on the architect, but in the main he agreed with the previous speaker.

Mr. Winsor stated that in Melbourne and Sydney, builders would not dream of going back to the old system of taking off the quantities themselves. He thought quantities were a check on the builder, and well worth a charge of three-quarters per cent. He understood that in Australia the quantity surveyors guaranteed their figures up to 99 per cent., and he noted that Mr. George gave a guarantee up to 98 per cent.

Mr. Andrews agreed with Mr. Winsor, and read an interesting statement dealing with the methods which could be followed, and the advantages to be gained by adopting the system.

Mr. Clark remarked that he had heard of some architects objecting to the employment of quantity surveyors, but they were being brought to realise the advantage of the system. Mr. George was a practical builder, and Dunedin was fortunate in being able to secure his services. To take off one's own quantities was an appalling job.

Mr. Walpole thought that to push the work off upon the architects was unnecessary.

Mr. Williamson thought that if the quantities were left wholly to the architect, it would eventually tend to do away with the builder altogether.

Mr. McCormack moved as an amendment: "That the question of providing schedules of quantities be left to each centre to decide for itself."

Mr. Simpson seconded, remarking that Dunedin was well satisfied, and other Associations should concur.

Mr. Nightingale thought that if Christchurch architects took off their own quantities, there was a danger of their becoming their own builders later on.

Mr. Williamson stated that if architects were asked to take off quantities, they passed the job on to a builder in nine cases out of ten. What object was there in employing a quantity surveyor?

Mr. Preston said it was evident that Dunedin was highly pleased with the system, the value of which they had been able to prove, but members speaking against the amendment did not appear to realise this point. Conference was not compelling Christchurch to fall into line with Dunedin. It was a waste of time to take off one's own quantities. Australia had quantity surveyors, and New Zealand should be equally progressive. He regretted that in Southland they had no quantity surveyor, and the architects there complained of the time taken to get Mr. George down to do this work. Apart from this objection, he supported the amendment.

Mr. Grenfell remarked that the work was made easier in Dunedin for the reason that the methods of Mr. George were well understood. If architects undertook the supplying of quantities, it would mean that the work would have to be viewed from a fresh standpoint in each case, as there was no set system of arriving at quantities.

The amendment was adopted.

GREETINGS.

The President read a telegram from the Master Painters' Conference in Wellington, reciprocating the greetings of the Conference which had been forwarded to them on the previous day.

DOMINION ORGANISER.

Mr. Mildenhall moved: "That during recess the Executive assess the amount required from each Association to pay for an organiser for the Dominion, each Association to arrange its own methods of securing its quota towards same before next Conference, and if promises given are amply sufficient to provide the necessary funds, the appointment to be then considered."

Mr. O'Connell seconded.

Mr. Mildenhall, speaking to the motion, suggested that it was no use talking about appointing an organiser until the money was forthcoming. The Executive must have the money in sight before attempting anything practical, and each Association should find its quota.

Mr. Andrews read a telegram showing that the building permits for five centres amounted to 2½ millions sterling. A levy based on this sum would more than solve the question of providing £1,000 or £2,000 per annum.

Mr. Campbell thought they should know what amount per member would be required. The Executive should assess the amount to be provided by the different centres, so that effect should be given to the proposal to provide an organiser as soon as possible.

The chairman thought it would be impossible to get the matter ready before next Conference.

Mr. Simpson recalled the remarks of Mr. Campbell that the appointment of a Dominion organiser would not benefit Hawke's Bay. He would advocate the appointment of one organiser for the North.

Island, and another for the South Island. Each Association should make the question a burning one, and endeavour to have some workable scheme ready for consideration at next Conference. If employees could organise, so could builders. What was wanted was unanimity of opinion and of action.

Mr. Grenfell gave details of the financial position of the Federation, and the probable cost of the proposed organisers.

During subsequent discussion, Mr. Williamson stated that Christchurch was waiting for the registration of new rules. When this was done, they would procure a local organiser to get new members in the first place, and then to help members generally. He favoured local organisers.

The Chairman read Mr. Meuli's proposal to the 1915 Conference, which was then supported by the President. This plan was to appoint an advisory officer at £100 per annum, plus £1 1s. for every day he was away from home, and hotel and travelling expenses. He favoured this plan.

Mr. Simpson suggested securing the mature opinion of each Association before launching out. The Unions were strong organisations, and there was a danger of builders being pushed to the wall unless they organised in their own defence.

Mr. Mildenhall considered that the funds should be raised on the basis of membership of each Association, *pro rata*, and the method of collection should be left to each Association. He was not in favour of undue haste.

The Chairman suggested leaving the matter in the hands of the Executive, and asked if Conference would be willing, in the event of favourable replies being received from Associations, that the Executive should appoint an organiser at once?

Mr. O'Connell: It would be better to make it clear whether one or two organisers would be required.

Mr. Winsor pointed out that the motion only stipulated for one organiser.

Mr. Wilson suggested that the mover and seconder should amend the motion so as to provide for one or two organisers, and if within six months the replies were satisfactory, the Executive should be empowered to make the appointments.

Mr. Mildenhall thereupon amended his motion to read: "That during recess the Executive assess the amount required from each Association to pay for an organiser or organisers for the Dominion, each Association to arrange its own methods of securing its quota towards same before the next Conference, and if the promises given are amply sufficient to provide the necessary funds, the appointment to be then considered; provided that if at an earlier date than next Conference the replies from the various branches are favourable, the Executive have power to make the necessary appointment of such organiser or organisers."

The motion, on being put in its amended form, was carried.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

A remit from the New Zealand Technical School Teachers' Association relating to the value of technical education was read, and it was decided that the Executive communicate with the Minister of Education on the points raised.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The Chairman (Mr. Mainland) said that he had great pleasure in nominating Mr. Winsor for next term as President. He had always found that Mr. Winsor took great interest in the work of the Federation, and that he was possessed of great acumen.

Mr. Williamson seconded the motion, which was adopted with acclamation.

Mr. Winsor, in accepting office, expressed his acknowledgment of the honour. He then took the chair, which was vacated by Mr. Mainland.

The following officers were also elected:—President's representative in Wellington, Mr. H. Mainland (appointed by the President); Vice-President, Mr. J. McCormack; Treasurer, Mr. W. I. Clark (re-elected); Executive Committee: Messrs. W. H. Bennett, A. M. Wilson, and A. H. Mildenhall.; Hon. Auditors, Messrs. J. C. Brown and G. Dick; Employers' Federation Representatives: (a) Advisory Board—Mr. H. Mainland, (b) Parliamentary Committee—Mr. W. H. Bennett.

FINANCE.

Mr. Campbell moved: "That the next levy be 5s."

The mover explained that the reduction would be justified by the fact that there would be no expense for printing new conditions of contract.

Mr. Grenfell pointed out that additional expense had been caused through the necessity of engaging counsel in connection with the dispute over new conditions of contract. This was absolutely necessary in order to give all information and assistance to the Association in so important a matter. The special expense under this head might come to about £100.

There being no seconder, the motion lapsed.

Mr. Campbell remarked that he fully appreciated what the Federation had done, and in putting forward the motion he was simply carrying out the wishes of his Association.

Mr. Nightingale moved: "That the annual levy be 10s."

This was seconded by Mr. Souster, and carried.

Mr. Simpson moved, and Mr. Williamson seconded: "That the annual subscription to the Employers' Federation be £10 10s."

Carried.

AUCKLAND INVITATION ACCEPTED.

Mr. Morris, on behalf of the Auckland Association, extended a very hearty invitation to the Federation to hold its next Conference in Auckland.

Mr. Souster supported the invitation, and suggested that some arrangement might be made to meet in Rotorua.

The invitation to hold the next Conference in Auckland was unanimously accepted.

It was agreed, on the motion of Mr. Mildenhall, seconded by Mr. Preston, that the next Conference be held on a suitable date in February, 1924.

CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT.

It was resolved that the drafting of a reply to the Institute of Architects in regard to the conditions of contract be left in the hands of a special committee appointed to confer with the architects, with the addition of Messrs. Mildenhall and Souster.

APPRENTICES.

The following motion was moved by Mr. Mainland and carried unanimously: "That in view of the present and future probable shortage of skilled workers, that each centre represented on this Federation be strongly recommended to make arrangements for the placing of a fixed percentage of selected apprentices to the carpentry and joinery trade each year."

Mr. Mainland remarked that he felt strongly the responsibility on the trade to give more encouragement, and to devote more attention to the training of lads who may be expected to form the future members of the Federation. His idea was that youths who had a natural ability, both practical and theoretical, should be taken in hand by local Associations and assisted and encouraged in every way, by special monetary consideration and other suitable reward.

VOTES OF THANKS.

On the motion of Mr. Mildenhall the following resolution was unanimously carried: "That the Dunedin Association be heartily thanked for the able and hospitable manner in which visitors have been entertained."

A hearty vote of thanks was also carried to the retiring President and Executive for their services to the Association.

Finally, the Conference adopted a cordial vote of thanks to Mr. A. S. Cookson (secretary of the Dunedin Association), and to his assistant for their capable help during the proceedings.

THE SOCIAL SIDE.

The delegates to the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Federation of Master Builders were splendidly entertained by their Dunedin hosts, and opportunity was taken to show appreciation of this fact by presenting a handsome silver bowl to Mr. McCormack, President of the Dunedin Association. The gift was handed over by the new President, Mr. W. H. Winsor (Christchurch), and was suitably acknowledged by Mr. McCormack. It is a pleasing coincidence that the previous presentation of the kind was to Mr. Preston, of the Invercargill

Association, whose wife is a sister of the Dunedin President.

Another presentation was made to Mr. H. Mainland (Wellington), the retiring President of the Federation, "in appreciation of his unselfish service to the New Zealand Federation," as an inscription stated on the silver-mounted oak tray and solid silver tea service which Mr. Winsor handed to Mr. Mainland at the convivial gathering on the day following the conclusion of business. Mr. Mainland replied, expressing appreciation of the fine gift, and the pleasure which he had derived from his efforts to render service to the builders of the Dominion.

The Dunedin Association provided a splendid day's outing for the visitors. They first inspected the Abbotsford Tile Works, and were then motored to Mosgiel, Outram, and Henley, where an excellent luncheon was served. Then the party proceeded by launch to Taieri Mouth, the trip being greatly enjoyed. After refreshments had been provided, the motors took the party by a thirty-mile route along the beach to Dunedin, where, in the evening, at the Early Settlers' Hall, the annual banquet was held, among those present being the Mayor of Dunedin (Mr. Douglas), and Messrs. Geo. Simpson and Clark, two of the oldest members of the Federation. Mr. McCormack, President of the Federation, presided.

Town Planning.

SURVEYORS INTERESTED.

The Institute of Architects has ready done good service to town planning by reviving the subject. Editorial comment in the "Auckland Star" induced Mr. Arthur H. Bridge, President of the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, to write to the "Star" showing that the surveyors' organisation is taking practical steps in the matter. Mr. Bridge stated:—

Your leading article on this subject and the reported remarks made at the annual meeting of the New Zealand Institute of Architects are of particular interest to surveyors. I should like to state that the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors has been interesting itself in town planning for years, as evidenced by the presidential addresses delivered at its annual meetings. Further, representations have on various occasions been made to the authorities on the subject. Within the past few months the Hon. Minister of Lands has been communicated with, urging that comprehensive town planning legislation should be brought before Parliament. The members of the surveying profession are the persons best able to give expert advice on the requirements of the Minister, the various Acts, and local authorities with regard to sub-divisions into "towns," and know from long experience the difficulty that exists under the present system in co-ordinating these various requirements, and at the same time evolving a scheme of sub-division which will be acceptable to their clients.

With reference to reported remarks made at the Architect's Annual Meeting in connection with the roading of estates by surveyors, the examples we have had in New Zealand of how architects subdivide land have not been happy ones. The New Zealand Institute of Surveyors will be only too pleased to meet other bodies and persons interested and discuss this important subject with them. In the meantime, it is continuing its endeavours quietly and unostentatiously to have the method of control over "township" sub-divisions improved.—I am, etc.,

ARTHUR H. BRIDGE,
President N.Z. Institute of Surveyors.

Chair of Architecture.

REQUEST TO AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY COUNCIL.

AUCKLAND ARCHITECTS' DEPUTATION.

A deputation from the Auckland branch of the New Zealand Institute of Architects waited upon the Auckland University Council recently in connection with the advocacy of the desirability of instituting a Chair of Architecture at Auckland. Mr. H. C. Grierson, President of the branch, stated that the Institute was pleased to have an opportunity of raising the question again. As stated in a letter before the Council, the establishment of a Chair of Architecture had been suggested about two years ago, and in order to demonstrate that they were earnest in their proposal, members had undertaken to find guarantees of financial support. The matter had since been placed before a fair number of persons interested in architecture, and although, to speak figuratively, the surface had only been scratched, the sum of £426 had been promised. This would be payable over a period of three years.

A HIGHER STANDARD SOUGHT.

Whilst the Auckland architects were prepared to assist the existing school of architecture in every way, they felt that something on a more advanced and modern scale was necessary. A man from abroad, continued Mr. Grierson, who possessed a sound knowledge of modern architectural principles and ideals was required. Such a man would be invaluable, since he could give the whole of his time to the students. Manifestly, it was impossible for an architect in practice to devote adequate energy to the teaching of classes at night. A thoroughly trained man of the modern school would do much to improve the standard of architecture in the Dominion.

BOOKS ON ARCHITECTURE.

Mr. R. A. Lippincott expressed himself strongly on the lack of books on architecture in the Public Library. It was a public shame. An adequate supply of the best books on the subject was essential to the artistic development of the country.

"There are 1,300 books on the Fine Arts," including architecture, and more than 2,000 books dealing

with the Useful Arts, including every form of building construction, sanitary plumbing, etc., in the Leys Institute," remarked Dr. Leys.

Professor Thomas said the matter of a Chair of Architecture was only a problem of financial ways and means. The salary of a competent man would be quite £1,000. The Institute had only £426 promised, and that was not enough for one year.

A member of the deputation said it would be possible to raise a larger sum if it were known that something definite would be done.

Dr. Leys (Chairman of the Council): It is hardly an opportune time to ask for funds. As it is, we have to appeal to the public for at least £20,000 for our new buildings.

EDUCATION REFLECTED.

On behalf of the architects it was further stated that young men entering the profession were not trained sufficiently at the beginning of their careers. They worked along on a more or less rudimentary knowledge until they had learned by experience much of what they should have known at the outset. In England and America architectural education was developing very fast, whilst France had a splendid system, whereby a talented student, no matter what his financial resources, could obtain a sound education. This was reflected in the magnificence of the architecture of French cities. New Zealand was a young country, and the present was the time to make a move. Architects played a prominent part in the building of cities, and any lack of educational facilities would assuredly be reflected in the appearance of the cities.

A SPECIAL GRANT REQUIRED.

Dr. Leys said the Council's balance was rather too much on the wrong side of the ledger to consider the proposal unless a special grant could be obtained. It did not seem that there was much hope of getting such a grant at the present time. The members of Council, however, were in entire sympathy with the movement, as was shown by their appointment of lectureships in architecture.

Mr. Grierson stated that the architects intended to revive the town planning movement, and a chair of architecture would help this considerably.

Professor Segar suggested that the architects should go directly to the Government and seek a special grant. The Council could back them up.

Mr. Grierson: We fear that our request would be as a voice crying in the wilderness.

Professor Thomas: Oh, no! It would at least let the Government see what the architects desired. If a joint deputation from Institute and Council sought the Government's assistance, it would help materially. If it were possible to get engineering grants it should be possible to get a smaller one for architecture.

After further discussion the architects were advised to seek assistance direct from the Government, and the Council referred the matter to the Education Committee.

18 APR 1923

Mr. Ingoid's Building Estimates.

A MISAPPREHENSION.

With reference to the statements made by Mr. A. E. Ingoid, of Brisbane, on the subject of the cost of building in New Zealand, the Auckland Master Builders' Association reports that members of its executive held a conference with Mr. Ingoid. The President of the Association, Mr. F. J. Fawcett, stated yesterday that as a result of the discussion it transpired that there had been an entire misunderstanding in regard to the class of building on which the dispute was based. The conference, Mr. Fawcett said, left the members of the executive satisfied beyond all doubt, as a result of Mr. Ingoid's own statements, that they had completely refuted his allegations.

Building Notes.

AUCKLAND.

Twenty-nine building permits, including 14 for dwellings, were issued by the Mount Albert Borough Council during the three weeks ended on February 14. The total value of the buildings was £15,254, of which £11,920 was for houses. From April, 1922, to date, 407 permits, involving an expenditure of £167,212, have been issued in the borough. These figures include 175 permits for dwellings, the total value of which was £139,416.

Building permits totalling £5965 have been granted by the Birkenhead Council, including additions to the Foresters' Hall, at an estimated cost of £3420. Preparations are in progress for the erection, in concrete, of eight shops in Mokoia Road.

At Takapuna the Town Clerk reports that from April 1st to date, 270 building permits, of a value of £116,916, have been issued. Included in the permits were those for 157 dwellings, valued at £100,003.

One Tree Hill Road Board advise that the total value of building permits issued during January was £7810. Permits for dwellings amounted to £7058, and for garages to £377.

An extensive scheme of improvements is contemplated by the Ellerslie Town Board. In addition to comprehensive road proposals, it is intended to erect a block of buildings, including a hall, with Board offices and shops.

At a recent meeting of the Auckland University College Council, it was decided to authorise the architects to call tenders for the installation of a hot-water heating system. It was also decided to ask the architects to confer with certain of the tenderers with a view to seeing how far the price for the lighting system can be reduced without injuring the system. The Council also considered in committee a proposal to instal steel casement window frames of English manufacture in the new buildings at an additional cost of £300, and this was subsequently agreed to.

An important feature of building activity in and around Auckland during the last year has been the large number of shops, or shops and dwellings combined, that have been erected in the nearer suburban districts. There has recently been erected two new blocks of shops at Victoria Avenue, and two brick shops are nearing completion at Remuera terminus, whereas in the vicinity of Royal Oak, over 20 shops have been erected during the year. At Newmarket, also, within the last three months, permits for the erection of ten new shops have been issued, at a total cost of nearly £9000. One of the most important of Auckland's suburban building projects is the erection of a new municipal block at Newmarket, the cost of which will be £13,000. This will contain five offices

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for the Borough Council, four shops, a social hall, library and reading room. In Mount Eden district a block of ten shops, in reinforced concrete, is in course of erection, and at Dominion Road a theatre and three shops are nearing completion. In various other suburbs this particular phase of building activity is also evident.

AKAROA.

The Canterbury Hospital Board has decided to erect a new hospital on the site selected in Akaroa, at an approximate cost of £8,000.

FRANKTON.

The scheme for the erection of a library at Frankton is making good progress. Mr. F. B. Jolly has given the Hamilton Borough Council a suitable site for the institution, and the Council has authorised the expenditure of £2,000 on a building. Tenders for the work are now being called. An application is being made to the Carnegie Trust for a grant of £1,500 for the purpose of providing a lending department in connection with the library.

TE AROHA.

The Te Aroha Fire Board has accepted the tender of Mr. J. A. Morse a local builder, for the erection of a new ferro-concrete fire station, two storeys high, comprising motor room, social hall, committee room, and sleeping accommodation for several firemen. The contract price is £1,423.

WAIUKU.

The Franklin Memorial Hospital, which has recently been completed for the Auckland Hospital Board to the design of Mr. G. W. Allsop, architect to the Board, has cost £13,000 to build. Of this £1,500 was contributed by the residents of the district.

WELLINGTON.

The engineer reports to the Lower Hutt Borough Council that during the past fortnight building permits have been issued as follows:—One shop £1,500, five dwellings £4,525, one garage £45. Total £6,070. Councillor Mitchell stated that if the average was kept up it would reach £150,000 for the year.

Various works that will result in improvements in the city of Wellington are to be started shortly. The Hospital is to be enlarged and improved at a cost of over £100,000, and the Kaiwarra Bight of the harbour is to be filled in. This work will enable the much-needed new railway station to be built. A retaining wall will be necessary, and it will take 3½ years to construct.

Messrs. Clerc and Clerc, Wellington, and Mr. J. T. Mannix, New Plymouth, joint architects, invite tenders, closing April 19th, for the erection (in reinforced concrete) of St. Patrick's Church, Palmerston North.

Patents of Interest to Builders.

CONCRETE BUILDING.—A patent, No. 48,479, has been taken out by A. N. Macnicol, of Melbourne. This invention relates to improvements in the manufacture of concrete buildings, and has for its object to provide means whereby the various parts to form a complete structure are made at a base where the wall-panels, roof-trusses, roof-covering, ceiling-panels, and the like are prepared in readiness for transporting to any building site for erecting. The invention essentially consists in forming each part of a building in panel form by means of horizontal moulds, and these make the form of such a shape that columns connected by horizontal members are produced, fitted in with a veil of lesser thickness, the columns and horizontal members being reinforced in the usual manner, the veils being reinforced by wire-netting, expanded metal, or any other suitable reinforcing-means. A principal feature is the provision of means for securing the studs into the wall-panels so as to prevent the displacement thereof, and further means to prevent the studs from

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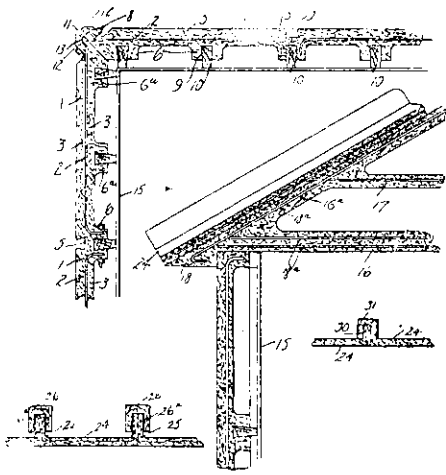
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loosening when same have expanded through contact with wet concrete and then shrunk. According to the invention, the wall-panels 1 are formed in horizontal moulds, the longitudinal reinforcing rods 2 and vertical rods 3 being in position prior to the green concrete being poured, and when the panel is set it is removed from the mould. Piers 6A and dovetailed openings 5 are provided for the



in the moulding operation, the dovetailed opening 5 being formed in half so that when two wall-panels are abutting it forms a complete dovetail. Where the reinforcing-bars 2 pass into the piers 6A a hole is provided therein, and also through the reinforcing-bar, so that when the bolts 7 and 8 are passed therethrough to hold the panels together there is little possibility of the piers breaking when

the tension used in tightening the bolts is applied. The piers 6A are provided with dovetailed openings 9 to accommodate studs 10 which are tapered both transversely and longitudinally, so that when shrinkage occurs the studs have a tendency to fall to the lower part of the panel and thereby automatically wedge themselves into position. Also dovetailed openings 8A are arranged horizontally to accommodate members 9B, to which the internal lining is also secured. A dovetailed opening 11 is formed on the corner 12 of the wall-panels which abut on an angle 13, each panel being formed so that when the abutting panels are in position they are either in line or at right angles to each other, although by making the angle 13 to suit any projection may be obtained. When the wall-panels are in position, internal wall-covering 15 may be secured to the studs 10 in any suitable way, thus providing a sound wall-structure suitable for any class of building. When the wall-panels 1 are in position, and it is desired to place the roof-truss or principal thereon, they are also formed ready for erection upon the wall-panels.

CONCRETE BLOCK MOULD.—A patent, No. 48,434, has been taken out by W. McKay, of Sydney. The invention consists in forming diagonally divided container moulds, with means for tonguing and grooving individual blocks and for the production of "rock" or other irregular faces by means of inset slip-plates, and further for the provision of withdrawable divisional plates which are slidable horizontally through slits in the casing into and out of position, thereby to free them for other use without injuring green goods and also to free the enclosing mould to enable it to be opened up to leave an assembly of moulded blocks or slabs, standing on the table or slab where they are produced, there to set and season. Other features are included. The illustration is a top plan showing two L-shaped casing-moulds secured together by corner-bolts at the diagonally opposite opening corners and the enclosed space subdivided by three longitudinal slide-plates and two cross-plates. There is also included

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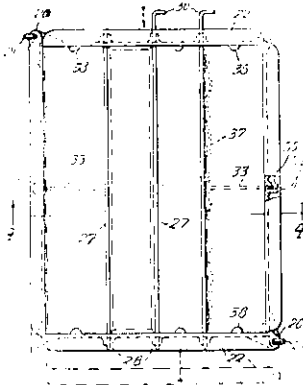
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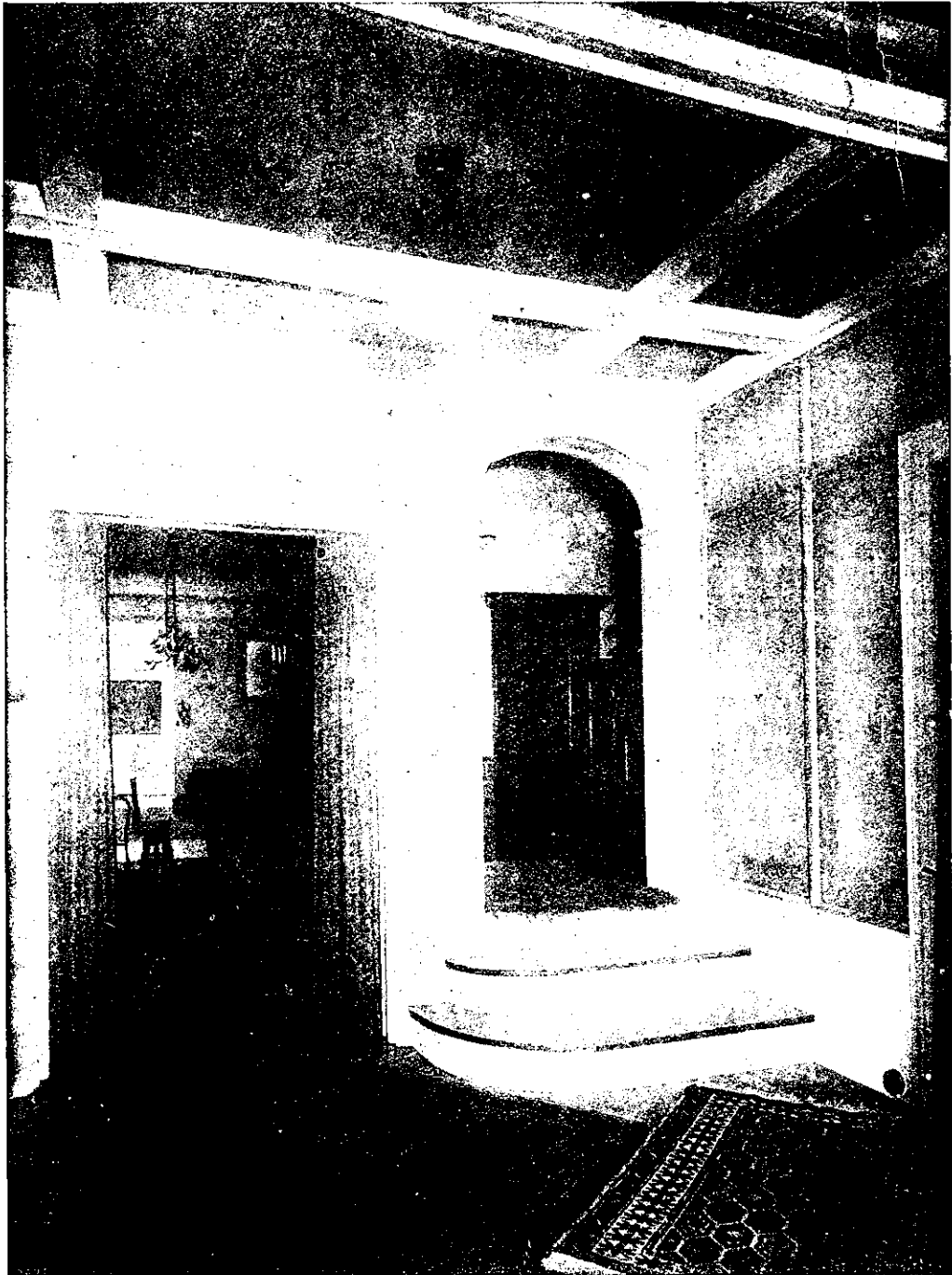
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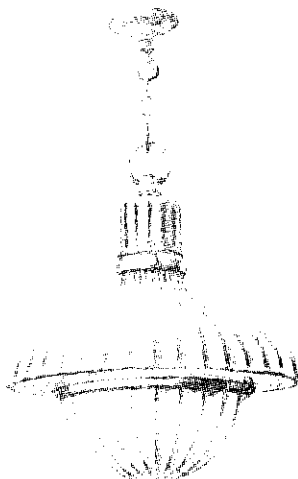
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