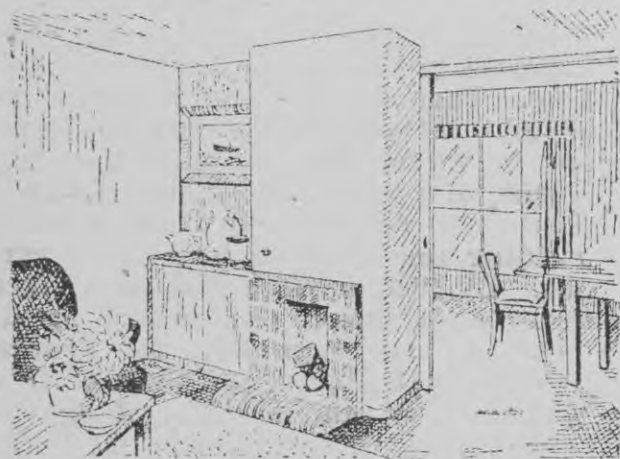


dingy, inconvenient kitchens. Comfortable and healthy, attractive and efficient modern homes offer much to the post-war owner.

A likely development in building in New Zealand is the wider use of concrete for houses, for timber is becoming increasingly scarce, and bricks do not lend themselves to all types of design. The trend on the Continent when using concrete is that the roof and floors are supported on indepen-



dent columns. Thus there are no weight-carrying outside walls and partitions may be placed as best suits the plan and not the construction. This permits of whole walls of glass or glass bricks and internal partitions, such as in the dining-recess, often semi-circular in shape.

The implications of the transfer of the weight of the roof to columns divorced from exterior walls are important. For centuries man sought to achieve his own cellular unit—the house—and he has obtained his desire. And it is understandable that in this age of speed and noise he should desire a refuge. But having acquired such privacy, there appears to be no great reason why he should divide his house into rigid cells, with strong walls and doors. A trend in the house today is to get away from this rigidity of design by a fluid arrangement of living rooms whereby folding or sliding doors alone can be used to divide living and dining rooms. Thus rooms may be used singly or conjointly as the occasion demands. Such an arrangement also permits halls and passages to be reduced to a minimum.

The flat roof has been a feature of many modern houses in New Zealand,

but it has not always been entirely successful where used with wood. It has one great advantage in that it gives freedom of planning. Lay-outs of rooms can be adopted that would not normally be possible with the pitched roof. Used with concrete, it is probable that there will be a wider use of the flat roof in coming years.

Correct orientation and the wider use of glass go hand in hand. The health value of being able to introduce a generous supply of sunshine into the house is being increasingly realised. Houses are being designed so that the important rooms receive plenty of sun, and window space is becoming larger all the time. It is now possible to have windows of any size, to the extent of complete glass walls, if desired, so long as the necessary lateral support is provided.

If timber is available in New Zealand in large supplies after the war it is probable that new uses will be made of it. In recent years, revolutionary methods of building in wood have been introduced, and after the war water-proof plywoods and similar materials will probably play a big part in construction. Especially will this be so in the pre-fabricated house. It will be interesting to see the part pre-fabrication will play in postwar housing. It is likely to be used extensively by the State, but whether or not private enterprise will adopt it remains to be seen. Internally, new wall finishes and plastic materials will be used extensively, and should enhance the home generally.

Already great strides have been made in improving the kitchen, which, after all, is really the workshop of the housewife. More and more women in countries affected by the war have been forced to do all their own cooking and housework, and they have gained a new realisation of what an efficient kitchen can mean in the life of those who have to run a house. Consequently, many improvements have been effected, not only in lay-out, but in labour-saving devices. Refrigerators, electric dish-washers, and even automatic washers and ironers are making their appearance at prices within reach of the average home-builder.