

SESSION II.  
1906.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# WORKERS' DWELLINGS

(REPORT ON, BY THE HON. THE MINISTER OF LABOUR).

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*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 20 of "The Workers' Dwellings Act, 1905."*

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Wellington, 2nd July, 1906.

## PRELIMINARY MEASURES.

EARLY in January, 1906, a commencement was made in the purchasing of suitable areas for workers' homes in the vicinity of Wellington—viz., at Petone and the Lower Hutt—followed shortly afterwards by the acquisition of an area at Otahuhu, near Auckland, by which the Land Purchase Board were enabled to effect an exchange with the Auckland Agricultural and Pastoral Association for an excellent site for workers' dwellings close to the Ellerslie Railway-station, to the benefit to both parties to the exchange, the association obtaining an increased area for show-grounds in every way more suited to them, and the Crown a site eminently suited for workers' dwellings. A portion of the Otahuhu property known as the Ecclestone No. 2 Settlement was retained for workers' dwellings and a portion for opening under the Land for Settlements Act as suburban areas. At Christchurch the Crown fortunately had an area in its possession of 9 acres, situated at Sydenham, which was at once set apart for workers' dwellings. At Dunedin, in the Borough of Roslyn, an area of 12 acres, known as the Windle Settlement, was purchased in readiness to meet workers' requirements.

## WORKERS' DWELLINGS.

The next step taken to give effect to Parliament's direction to proceed with the erection of dwellings for Workers was the setting up by Cabinet, on the 12th February, 1906, of an Advisory Board, consisting of the Under-Secretary for Lands (Chairman), the Colonial Architect, the Assistant Secretary for Labour, and Mr. March, the Inspector and Supervisor of Workers' Dwellings; the Colonial Architect to have the general supervision of the whole of the works. The duties of the Board were to advise the Minister of Labour:—

- (1.) Upon the designs to be used, and the class of houses to be erected in brick or timber.
- (2.) To recommend the architects to be employed and designs to be adopted, also the emoluments to be given, and to advise as to the appointing of overseers or clerks of works. The architects whose designs were chosen to have the carrying-out of the supervision of the erection of the houses in the several centres.

Immediately upon being set up the Board proceeded to visit all the sites and to arrange what street-formation and drainage-works were necessary, and to obtain estimates of the cost of carrying out the same.

The necessary authority for money-expenditure having been obtained, designs were invited from architects throughout New Zealand, and no less than 150 designs were received. Of this number thirty-four were selected, approved by Cabinet, and accepted as being the best and most suitable.

As soon as the designs for the erection of cottages were approved, recommendations were made by the Board and approved by Cabinet for the immediate erection of twelve houses adjoining Otahuhu Railway-station (to meet the needs of workers at the various industries in progress in its vicinity); and of twenty-two houses on the west side of Ellerslie Railway-station for Auckland workers—twelve designs by local architects having been chosen. For Wellington and Petone workers the Board received approval of the immediate erection of twenty-five houses on the Here-taunga Settlement, Petone, using seven different designs by Wellington architects. This was followed by approval of the erection of twenty houses on the Sydenham area, Christchurch, from six of the prize designs chiefly drawn by local architects, and finally the obtaining of approval of the erection of twenty houses on the Windle site in the Borough of Roslyn, Dunedin.

The street-formation at Petone having been finished, tenders were called for and have been accepted for the erection of twenty-five houses on that site. For all the others the architects have the plans well in hand, and as soon as ready tenders will be called for in each city. A site has also been procured for workers' homes at Palmerston North, and street-formation works are in progress.

#### REGULATIONS.

Regulations have been drawn up and approved by His Excellency the Governor in connection with the letting of the dwellings by the several Land Boards, and the Inspector has made a beginning in Wellington by holding meetings and explaining their provisions, and also exhibiting plans of the buildings proposed to be erected. He has already had a very large number of applications. The provisions of the Act and Regulations will be explained in turn in each of the chief centres by Mr. March.

Great difficulty is experienced in obtaining suitable land close to the City of Wellington; but, fortunately, the Crown holds an acre fronting on Coromandel Street, off Constable Street, upon which some ten houses can be erected, and sites for another five or six houses may be obtained at the city end of Polhill Gully.

#### STATEMENT REQUIRED BY ACT.

Also, in accordance with the provisions of section 20 of the Workers' Dwellings Act, the following statement is submitted:—

(a.) Moneys expended in acquiring sites, £52,000.

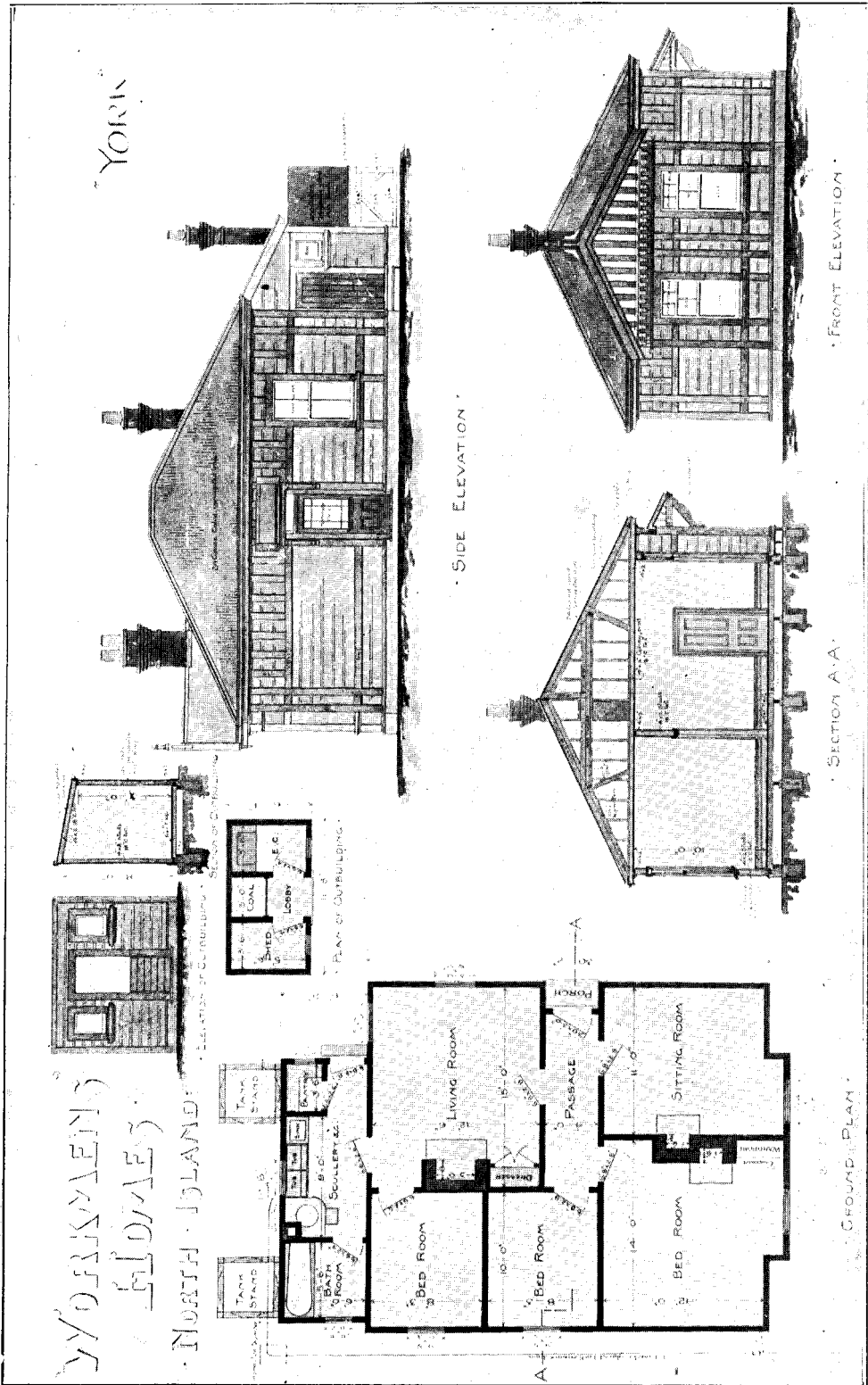
(b. and c.) No dwellings yet erected, and no rentals received.

In conclusion, it was a saying of De Tocqueville's that "If the great questions at the beginning of this century were mainly political, those which will convulse the world at its close will be social"; and, looking at the crowded lanes of some of our cities, surely no more burning question can be more fully discussed than that of the better housing of the worker. And certainly worse off, it has been truly said, may be the poor man whom civilisation has made what he is, than was his savage ancestor—far worse his lot who lives in the back lane of a great city, where pure air, and light, and room, and cleanliness are denied, than that of a man of another time who roamed in the forest beneath the sky of heaven.

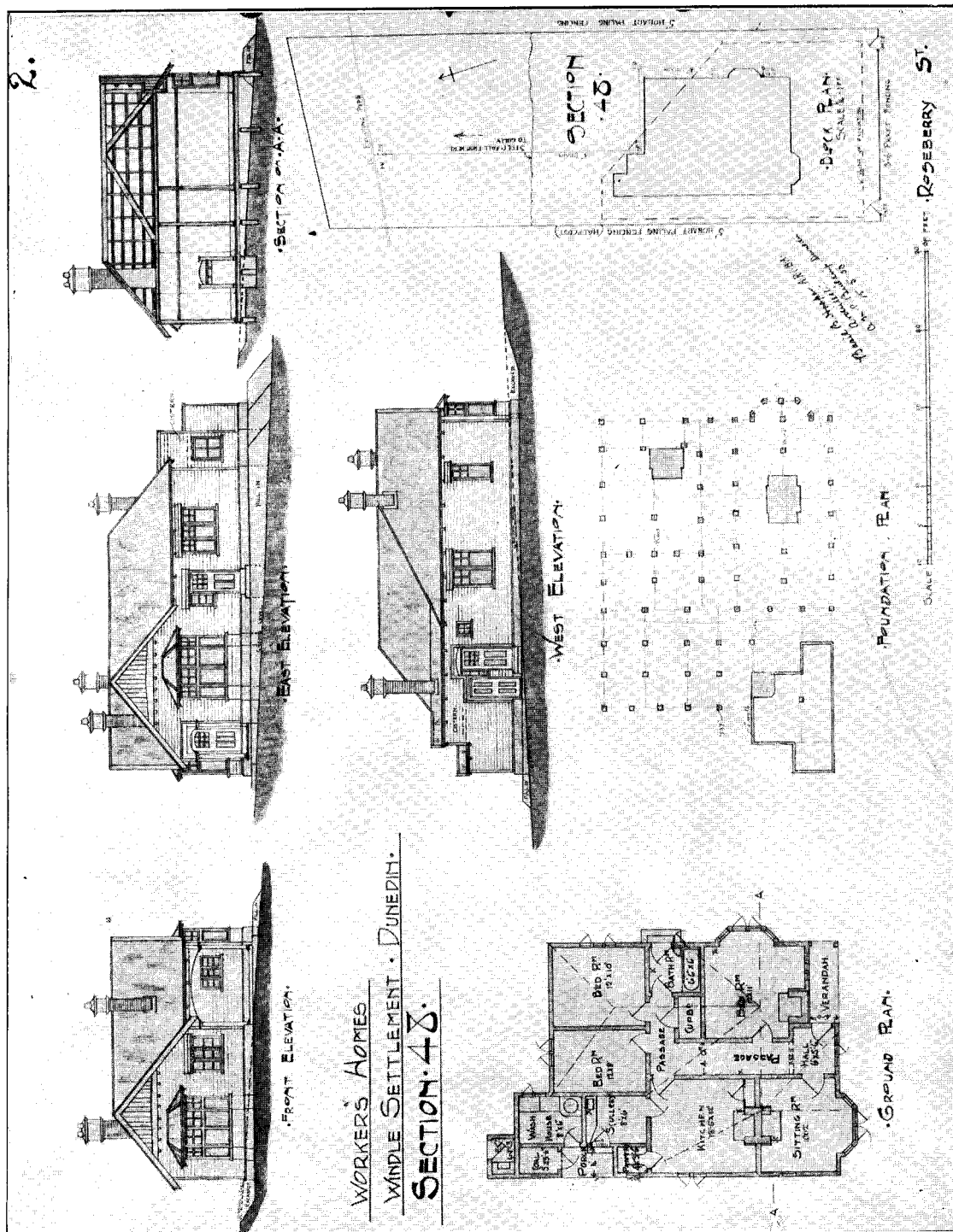
*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (1,550 copies), £1 2s. 6d.

*Price 3d.]*

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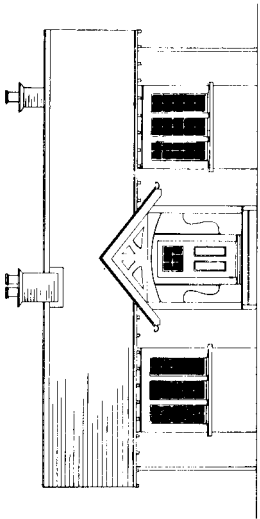




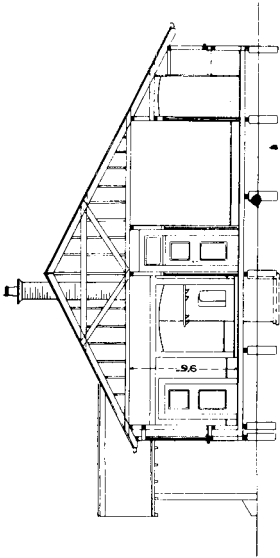




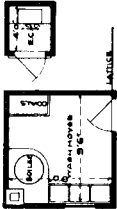
THREE-PROPOSED WORKMENS  
DWELLINGS TO BE ERECTED AT  
ELLERSIE-SCALE OF FEET THREE



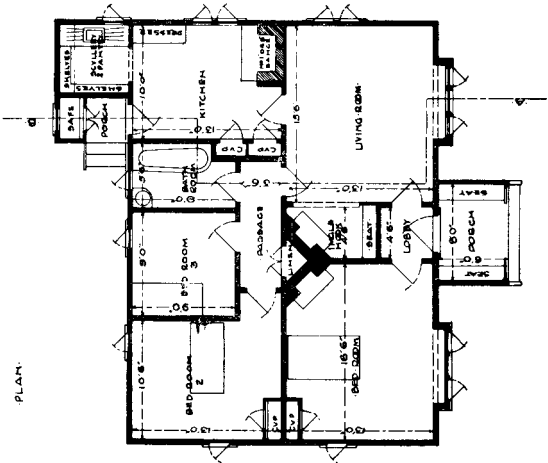
FRONT ELEVATION



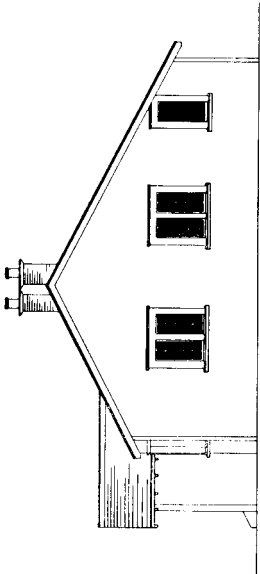
SECTION ON A-B



PLAN



PLAN



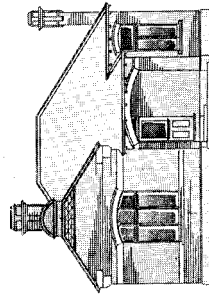
SIDE ELEVATION

Arnold, E. B. BIRD  
Architect  
113 Victoria Avenue  
Quebec

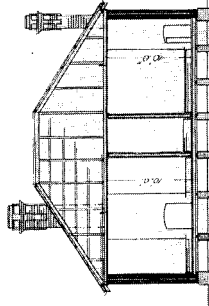




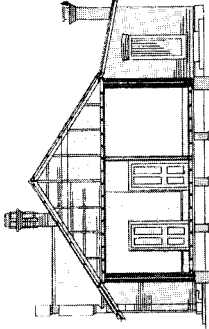
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... NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT ...



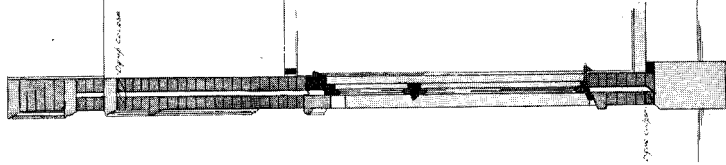
FRONT ELEVATION



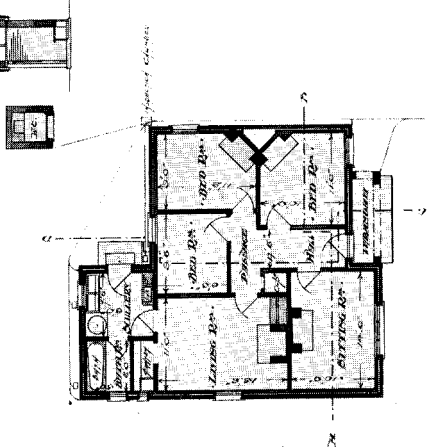
SIDE ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION



LONGITUDINAL SECTION



GROUND PLAN

... HOUSE, HAVING THE FOLLOWING ROOMS ...  
... TWO BEDROOMS, BATH, ...  
... KITCHEN, DINING ROOM, ...  
... LIVING ROOM, ...

