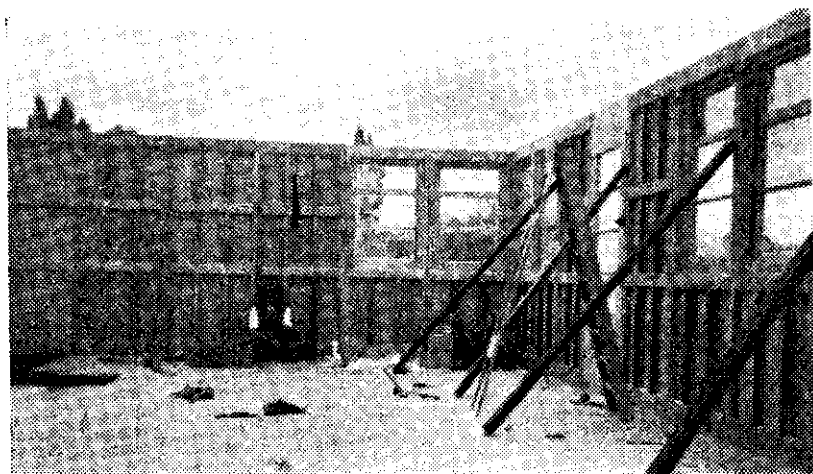
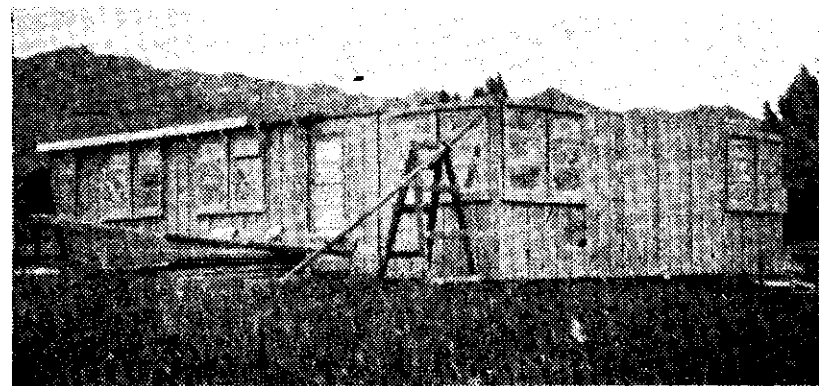


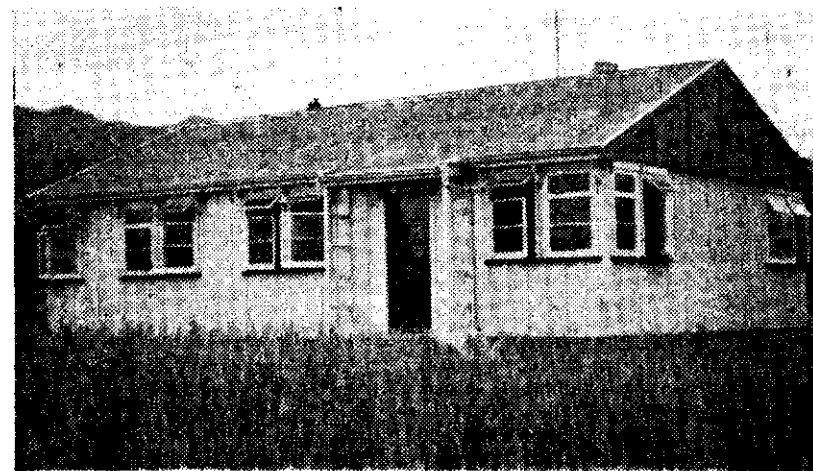
8. 0 a.m.: A lorry leaves the factory with the house in sections.



10. 0 a.m.: The outside walls begin to rise.



12. 0 noon: Work is well advanced.



6. 0 p.m.: The house is finished, apart from roof-covering, gutters and plumbing, which will be done next day.

A HOUSE IN NINE HOURS

WE glanced at the report on the competition for pre-fabricated houses as we made our way up to Parliament Buildings to see the exhibition of plans. "Better houses . . . cheaper . . . quicker to construct . . . less wasteful in construction . . . smaller proportion of skilled labour needed . . ." It sounded like good news to towns where people are overcrowded, where the housing shortage means high rents, where old houses are persistently cut up into flats unsuited for young children, where even the promise of new houses after the war depends on the supply of skilled labour still available to construct them.

A small group of people had collected round the prize-winning plans by R. T. Walker and Paul Pascoe, of Christchurch. Someone was pointing out the merits of pre-fabrication.

"You see, it's like this," he said. "All the pieces of the house are made on a large scale in the factories. Here you can see the plans for all the pieces that are needed for this house. There is a piece of the outside wall with '22 Thus' written underneath it. Well, 22 pieces like that will be needed. There is a piece of the wall with a casement window '9 Thus.' Another piece here has the safe attached. Here are the doors, and here are the plans for the inside walls and doors. All these pieces can be loaded on to the truck just as you see it in the picture there, and driven to the section. Then four carpenters and three labourers get going and all they need to do is to fit all the pieces together. There you have the house as it looks by the time they knock off in the evening—done in nine hours' working time." (see photographs).

"Just Like Bombers"

"Like the bombers that they are building," said some one. "If they can do it with aeroplanes and ships for the war, why not for houses for us to live in in peace time?"

"What I like, said an elderly mother-in-law, "is that there aren't any bits of timber and things cluttering up the section for weeks. When my daughter's house was built there were men working on the place for months, and ever such a lot of bits of wood and things were stolen, and there was a lot of waste. If they know just exactly how much timber is needed at the factory and it is supplied from the timber mills, well, it must be cheaper!"

"Certainly," said the first speaker, "that is one of the points. Besides, in the factories a lot of the work can be done by unskilled men, or at least they can learn how to make a part of the house skilfully in a short time. That is why this competition is run by the Rehabilitation Committee—more work for men to do when they get back, and more houses for them to live in."

Even a Pram Garage!

It sounds all right, we thought, but we looked for the flies in the ointment.

(Continued on next page)