

Mr. R. L. Levin's House.

This splendid house, built from the designs of Mr. John S. Swan, is situated on part of about two acres of land that extends from Hobson street to Thorndon quay, the main approach being from the first-named thoroughfare by a fine carriage drive of rolled Karori gravel. The front elevation is artistically uneven, affecting the English classical style, but in no way has the architect taken conventionality as a guide. The broad flight of concrete steps and tiled dais lead to the pillared entrance in the centre, while overhead is an indented balcony. On the left-hand side is a large bay window, built up square, and overhead is another balcony which extends round the west side of the house, and is for the use of servants. The building on all sides is highly ornamental, flutings here, jutties and friezes there, while over each of the principal entrances is the Levin arms, picked out in plaster. There is another fine entrance on the Thorndon-quay frontage, which give the inmates the choice of three doors—to the drawing-room, the morning-room, and the dining-room. Over the outlook of the latter apartment, and extending over the rear entrance, is another balcony which provides a fine view of the larger half of the harbour and surrounding hills. The roof is covered with terra cotta Marseilles tiles, which give the unchimneyed roof the appearance of a richly hued and highly ornamental canopy. The roof is without the usual cluster of chimneys, for the rooms, except the kitchen, are without fire places, and are steam-heated by radiators of the latest American style. A dive into the basement shows two large boilers, which supply steam to the radiators, and the heat is delicately regulated in the simplest manner. After the basement (where is also the wine cellar), and the main entrance from Hobson street, the eye at once catches the beautiful designs of the tinted lead-light windows, which over and on either side of the two pairs of doors, throw pretty colours on the rich pile under foot. Facing the visitor are doors leading direct to the morning-room, dining-room, and drawing-room, which look out on to Thorndon quay, while the study—facing Hobson street—is found by turning immediately to the right on entering. The vestibule itself is a large apartment, comfortably furnished, dadoed with fine panneling in polished rimu and gracefully ornamented with fluted pillars of plaster of Paris, surmounted by Ionic caps. On the right hand side, just beyond the study door, is a six-foot staircase in two flights, leading to the first floor, and between the bottom of the staircase and the drawing-room the vestibule runs along to a side entrance. As to the rooms mentioned, all are large, and comfort has been studied right through. The study is pannelled to a height of 10ft. 6in. in polished cedar, above which the walls are obscured by a fancy papier mache of a sage-green tint, terminating in a fancy frieze in lighter shades. Off this room is a lavatory, with marble washstand and perfect conveniences. Here, as elsewhere throughout the house, the electric light fittings, taps, door handles, etc., are all nickel-plated. The dining-room measures 23ft. x 16ft. 6in., and here again are the graceful fluted pillars of white plaster on either side of the large bay window that commands an extensive view of sea and land. This room, which is richly pannelled all round in mahogany and mottled kauri, is indented on one side to accommodate a magnificent solid-oak sideboard. The furniture, also of oak, is upholstered in green

leather, an admirable contrast to the dark glowing red of the wall paper. Opening off the dining-room is the butler's pantry, and further on are the kitchen and scullery. The morning-room is a small, but bright, apartment, next to the dining-room, and next to that again is the drawing-room, similar in size to the dining-room, but with a large oriel window in the outside corner, which formation is continued above the roof in the style of a turreted round tower.

Mounting the stairs the pleasing effect of spacious tinted lead-light windows is again met with. The

is still another for guests. There are also linen presses, storerooms, a dispensary, and other small apartments for domestic utility. Where there is steam heat there must be ventilation, and this is arranged on an elaborate system. A visit paid to the garret discovered this usually empty space to be one mass of huge galvanised iron pipes, some of them two feet in diameter, leading from every room in the building to above the floor. Each of these pipes has a regulator, by which the area of draught can be regulated to a nicety. Another speciality is the stove in the kitchen, by which



RESIDENCE OF MR. R. L. LEVIN, WELLINGTON.

[John S. Swan, Architect.]

stairway terminates in another large vestibule or landing from which the several night apartments open off. No. 1 bed room on the near-east corner has a fine oriel window commanding a beautiful view, and is elaborately fitted with electric light, including a "burglar switch," which, being pressed, lights up every passage throughout the house. Probably the best private bath room in New Zealand is next to this room. On its rubber-tiled floor, there is a large white enamel Roman bath, with hot and cold water, a showerbath with a large enamel tray to stand in, and a patent Sitz bath. Besides these there is an elaborate marble washstand fitted with hot and cold water, with shining nickel-plated fixings and a swivel mirror attached. Other conveniences in this china-tiled apartment are equally elaborate and convenient. In the natural order of things comes the dressing-room, another nice airy room, papered with pink roses, and having entrance to a breezy balcony. Other bed rooms on a less lavish scale look out on to Hobson street, as do also the servants' bed rooms, all of which are electric-lit and provided with steam radiators. The servants have a comfortably fitted bath room for themselves, and there

cooking may be done by either burning coal, coke or gas, the fumes from which are led away to the air by the huge ventilator, which is as a canopy over the range.

The house is beautifully illuminated throughout with electric light, and is fitted with telephonettes (so that speech may be had with anyone in another part of the house without moving from the room). Most of the electric lights are fitted with a double switch so that if one wishes to light a way across a vestibule or passage he can switch off the light on the opposite side to that where he turned it on.

The building is of solid concrete with a facing of fine cement plaster, and was erected on the day-work system, under the superintendence of Messrs. H. Andrews and T. Waterhouse (clerks of works, representing Mr. Swan). The plumbing was done by Messrs. Jenkins and Mack; the electric light, bells and telephonettes were fitted by Messrs. Turnbull and Jones. Mr. W. Newman was the plasterer; and Mr. W. Tustin was responsible for the painting and paperhanging. Mr. Gerald Fitzgerald acted as consulting engineer to the architect, and Mr. W. Grant was the foreman in charge.



DINING-ROOM, MR. R. L. LEVIN'S RESIDENCE.



DRAWING-ROOM, MR. R. L. LEVIN'S RESIDENCE.