

our English Brunelleschi. He was another genius. He adapted Palladio's style to suit England. We have never had an architect since, to strike such a true note. Wren is commonly spoken of as the greatest English architect, but it is remarkable that the nearer Wren's work approached that of Jones the better it was. From the time of Inigo Jones till quite recently, very little improvement was made in construction, and it is remarkable as something more than a coincidence, that design did not improve to any extent. I consider that it is purely on account of this want of improvement that caused the great unrest during the nineteenth century. As we all know the last century was full of revivals of some sort or other—Classic, Gothic, Byzantine—in fact, examples of practically every style were erected.

During the last few years we have made use of what may be considered as new materials—steel and ferro-concrete. Surely we can invent a suitable finish for these materials—a finish that will not only be suitable for the construction, but suitable also as an indication of the times! Is our culture less than that of the Greeks, that we should be content with lines not more refined, or our inventive genius such that we cannot think of new forms without going to either the absurd or to the ugly? Let us do more than copy old work. Let us improve on what we have had handed down to us, and in course of time a new style, better for our purposes than anything we at present have, will develop. To me it is absurd to think that we cannot improve on our architecture, that new forms and improvement will never come, in spite of what many eminent architects have written and said on the subject.

### Report from Canterbury Branch N.Z. Institute of Architects

The Canterbury Branch of the New Zealand Institute of Architects' and the District Committee each held two meetings, during the present session, at which matters affecting the Branch were discussed.

The Students' Association held three meetings, the drawings for subjects set being criticised by members as follows:—

A Small Sports Pavilion—M. J. Guthrie.

A Week-end Cottage—J. G. Collins.

A Tea Kiosk in a Public Park—A. D. Reese.

Despite the loss by members who have enlisted, the membership remains about the same and the students continue to take a keen interest in the doings of the Association.

On the 24th June, Mr. Herdman Smith, Director of the School of Art, read a paper upon Historic ornament, before a good attendance of students and members of the branch. The paper dealt with the subject from the earliest times up to the present day and Mr. Herdman Smith illustrated his remarks by means of blackboard sketches, which in themselves were an education in drawing. At the conclusion of the reading, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded the lecturer.

On July 29th, Mr. R. Speight, Curator of the Canterbury Museum read a paper upon the building stones of Canterbury.

## Auckland Architect's Claim

### Supreme Court Judgment

#### "Soltar" on Flat Roofs

A judgment of interest to architects was delivered by Judge Cooper, sitting in the Supreme Court at Auckland on March 8th, 1916. The action was one in which A. B. Herrold, architect, claimed from the defendant, Frank Ross, the sum of £67 6s. for services rendered to, and money paid for, the defendant in connection with the erection of a residence for the defendant at Kohimarama, the defendant admitted that the plaintiff was employed by him as architect but denied that the roof of the residence referred to was duly erected and completed; and also disputed the accuracy of a claim for £7 travelling expenses claimed by the plaintiff. By counter claim, the defendant claimed from the plaintiff the sum of £120 for damages alleged to have been sustained by the defendant, in connection with the roof of the house. The contest between the parties was substantially upon this counterclaim.

The roof of the residence was a flat one. The specifications for the work provided for a "flat roof, the whole of the flat roof portion to be covered with Soltar a quarter of an inch thick, by the Soltar Company and the contractor to allow the sum of 1/9 per square yard for the work, in his tender, which includes the usual 10 per cent. for contractor."

The defendant alleged that after the erection of the house was completed, the Soltar on the roof oozed through the ceilings and that the plaintiff remedied this defect by having Malthoid nailed over it with clout nails, which were driven through the Soltar into the decking underneath. Even then the roof was not, and had not remained, watertight, water having, on several occasions, found its way into the house through the roof. He claimed that Herrold was guilty of negligence and a breach of duty and contract in specifying Soltar, also in covering the Soltar with Malthoid and using clout nails. The cost of removing the Soltar and other coverings and efficiently covering the roof, he estimated at £120.

The plaintiff's defence to the counter claim was a denial of any alleged negligence or breach of duty or contract.

In reviewing the evidence His Honour said that the evidence of both Ross and Herrold showed that Ross took a keen interest, when the plans and specifications were being prepared, in the details of the house, but there was a sharp contradiction between them in reference to the roof. Ross stated that he desired to have a flat roof and that, on reading the specifications, he was surprised that Soltar was specified; that he asked Herrold what Soltar was and that Herrold replied that it was a very good thing for the purpose and he had a guarantee from the Soltar Co. in regard to it. Ross's evidence