

inspector knows something of labour laws and nothing of sanitary science. I ask you, should these things be? Should our men, and women, boys and girls be shut in office, factory or workshop from 40 to 50 hours per week under conditions which must prejudice their health? As practical tradesmen: How often are you called in to renovate this class of building before it has reached the last stage of disrepair? And how often are you asked for an opinion as to the best method of treatment? A much more frequent question is, how cheap can you cover it up?

The average dwelling house is not always what it should be. Numbers of homes where human beings have to live are in a shocking state, ceilings and walls whitewashed, re-distempered and perhaps papered without being washed off. Walls papered and re-papered and filth of all sorts covered up, woodwork dirty, greasy and altogether vile.

to the men we employ. If we fail to educate the public on these matters who will take up the work? For it has to be done sooner or later, and we certainly are in a position to know more about the subject than most people.

We should first of all take it upon ourselves to point out to our clients on every possible occasion what we consider should be done when called upon to renovate old premises. We should also educate our apprentices so that they will not regard the sanitary side of the business so lightly as has been done in the past, the next generation of painters will then have a much better status than exists at present. I want also to advocate a proper system of inspection. We have at present a fairly efficient system of inspection of our back yards. If a poultry run is too close to a dwelling it has to be removed, if the rubbish is accumulating it must be carted away. These things we recognize as being necessary in



BEFORE AND AFTER!

A Residence in York Place, Dunedin, gutted by fire and reconstructed under the direction of Mr. Leslie Coombs, A.R.I.B.A., of Dunedin. Builder, Mr. Geo. Gibbs.

I have attempted to draw your attention to some of the more flagrant of the evils and to show that no organized attempt is being made to combat them. Have I overdrawn these little pictures? Have I stated anything but what you know to be true? Has not your experience as painters brought you in frequent contact with evils like these and sometimes worse? I think you will agree with me that this state of affairs is a constant menace to public health. How far it is responsible for the various epidemics which descend on us and take toll of health and life I do not know, but it is up to us to get busy and improve matters. It is time for us in the painting industry to rouse ourselves from our lethargy and publish the true state of the buildings we are called upon to patch up. I know some of us will lose a certain amount of business, but what of that? Surely we owe something to the community of which we form a part, as well as to ourselves and

order that the population (particularly of the congested areas) may be protected from infection and disease. We have medical inspection of children in the schools and dentists to see to the children's teeth. But apparently it is no one's duty to inspect the home, factory, or places of amusement, etc.

I would like to see the whole business brought under the control of the Public Health Department. Periodical inspection of all buildings should be made, and renovations in accordance with a specification set by the department when necessary in the interests of public health. All painters should have to pass an examination, be registered, and be liable to be struck off the register if found doing work in other than a proper manner. This is quite feasible, and at the present time certain other industries are working under a similar system. I refer to plumbers, pipe layers and electricians, and there may be others.