

to take the wool to England and send back the manufactured product, and labour and money are unnecessarily absorbed. Another important development which has already come to pass is the establishment in Australia of a large factory by Nestles Ltd., the world-wide business handling condensed milk and chocolate. Since it was announced that the firm of Lysaghts had decided to erect works in Australia several important British manufacturing companies have been considering the question of following on the same lines, partly because they have since learnt to realise the activities of their foreign competitors in this direction. Australia, though unable to ship many of the raw materials which she produces, is very prosperous at present owing to the arrangements which have been made by the Imperial Government for paying for these products, whether shipped or not. Consequently there are large amounts of money constantly waiting to be invested. Those engaged in pastoral, mining, and other Australian concerns, are particularly interested in the new development to secure a more active Anglo-Australian development of the industries of the Commonwealth, as it is realised that an opportunity now presents itself of associating themselves with some of the principal British manufacturers in developing certain industries in Australia which the war has shown to be vitally necessary. So far as New Zealand is concerned, we know of two cases in which firms of high standing have decided to establish manufactories in the Dominion. A branch factory of a well known wire business is to be established in Auckland, and the plans for a large building are in hand. Another important development is at Petone, near Wellington, where Messrs. Lever Bros., of Sunlight Soap fame, have acquired a large works site and some old factory buildings, and are putting in a soap-making plant to deal with their New Zealand trade. We would like to see the Government take an interest in this movement by freeing the Parapara iron deposits from the inertia which has tied them up for many years, and it could well undertake, for the sake of our primary producers, the great business of manufacturing nitrates by utilising the splendid water power resources of the South Island Sounds district.

Providing for Our Soldiers

A policy of brisk development is wanted as an important feature of the big problem of putting our fighting men back into civilian employment. Out of 107,380 New Zealanders who left our shores in the Expeditionary Force, 22,777 have returned. This is but a mild instalment of what is eventually to come, and the problem was easy enough to dispose of temporarily because the returning drafts were small, and spread over long periods. Even now, however, there has arisen a difficulty in placing a number of Auckland ex-soldiers in employment. The organisation to meet this need, the Discharged Soldiers' Information Department, has placed 2,968 men, but 11,490 happily managed without Government aid. We are afraid that this Department is becoming too much of a typical self-contained Government organisation, to

which soldiers will look mainly for "a Government job." If it is going to be a real success, a vital factor in the task of re-establishing the soldier as a citizen, it must branch out extensively, secure voluntary aid in all parts of the Dominion, and organise a thorough campaign in favour of preference to the returned soldier. Employers and prominent trade union workers should be asked to actively interest themselves in the Department's work, and the large employers of labour should be asked, as a national duty, to make openings for returned men, though they may be restless and below par in the matter of steady application to their civilian tasks for a while. Government jobs and soldiers' settlements will fall far short of covering all requirements, and we suggest that now is the time for employers as a whole to join with the Government in its repatriation scheme. Prospective openings for returned men should be scheduled up in readiness for the final rush when peace comes. Not only is this a reasonable thing to ask from the standpoint of patriotic duty, but it may well be regarded as a sound insurance policy against labour troubles which will certainly arise in an acute form if a large body of ex-fighting men is turned loose upon an unready and apparently unsympathetic world.

N. Z. Insurance Co.'s Offices

It is with some satisfaction over a fine piece of building done under the difficulties of war time that, in this issue, we give full particulars of the New Zealand Insurance Company's splendid new office in Queen Street, Auckland. This imposing and efficiently planned office block will enable Aucklanders to visualise the importance and prestige of a company which, starting in their midst, has grown to proportions beyond the dreams of its founders. Its business is not confined to the Dominion, and it is a matter for pride that such a company can go into the commercial world and hold its own anywhere. As for its new headquarters, we need not here particularise, but we call attention to the fact that the architects are a New Zealand firm—there was no need to go outside the Dominion for suitable plans and advice—while the principal materials are of New Zealand origin. The fine marble from Golden Bay is used for the first time in an Auckland building. It stands the chisel, and takes a high polish, so that when our architectural ideas expand, and there is a call for great and worthy national buildings, it is evident that we will not need to seek far for suitable material for the purpose. Credit must be given to the New Zealand Government for setting the fashion in the use of New Zealand marble. But for its adoption in the front and back elevations of Parliament Buildings, this fine building material would have remained inaccessible to the industry except at prohibitive cost. It is coming more and more into use for important buildings, and the putting down of a diamond saw plant in Wellington has enabled it to be cheaply worked up, despite its tough structure. The large amount of space given to the description of the New Zealand Insurance Company's building has necessarily curtailed, and in some cases excluded, other matters usually dealt with.